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No. 6

RECOMMENDED
FOR MATURE
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ALIEN WORLDS

FTM



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Steve Oliff



STRATOSPHERIC SCRIBBLINGS

c/o PACIFIC COMICS / 8423 Production Ave. / San Diego, CA 92121

Dear Bruce:

I'm more than delighted to have Pacific Comics on the newsstand; it's wonderful to have creativity and vitality back in the field. The old anticipation of our younger comic buying days comes back and I look forward to your new ideas and titles.

Rocketeer (terrific!), *Somerset Holmes*, *Twisted Tales* and *Alien Worlds* are particularly good and many of your other titles show a lot of promise. I'm a little concerned with a tendency towards gratuitous "sex and violence" in some instances, but hope your steady hand as Editor can keep a balanced perspective.

This letter is occasioned by the Al Williamson piece in *Alien Worlds* #4, "Land of the Fhre." Unless my memory is leading me astray, I've seen it before. I'm sure it was in either of *Witzend* or the old Buster Crabbe comics (circa 1952-3-4?)—I'd take a stab at issue #5—in any event, am I right or wrong? I think the last two panels are new, with a little reworking of the third last. New story, old art, I'd guess.

Anyway, I'd appreciate clarification. Good issue, good comics, you're all doing a splendid job.

Kindest Regards,
David Medhurst
5 Vicora Linkway
Suite 1807
Don Mills, Ontario
M3C 1A4

"Land of the Fhre" was first published in Wally Wood's "Witzend" magazine in the late 1960's as "Savage World" with a script by Wood and lettering by Arlene Williamson. It was originally intended for an issue of "Buster Crabbe Comics" in the early 1950's. "Savage World" was again printed in the mid-1970's by the Marvel Group. "Land of the Fhre" marks the first appearance of the job in color. None of the artwork was ever reworked in any edition—only the script.

—ed.

Dear Bruce,

Hoo boy, the "Inheritors" was sheer brilliance. Both story and art were just perfect. You've written some good stories since starting *Alien* and *Twisted*, but this is faraway the best. Very intelligent, slowly paced and it seemed so, uh, laid back(?) I don't know if you meant it but the story seemed to have a subtle anti-nuclear tone. It bugs me that important issues like that are completely ignored by comic book writers, except the occasional post-holocaust life stories (contradiction in terms—

no?). Now that certain parties have gained their much sought after creative freedom they are turning out dreadful stories, and only you and Doug Moench are consistently producing good stories, my thanks.

Scott Hampton's art was also a joy to behold, the figures, the landscapes, the scenery and the colour were so far removed from regular four-colour comics that it was incredible.

Alas, not all of the issue was this good. "Pi in the Sky" had the usual great art and colouring of Ken Steacy but the story, knowingly over-written, took up too much space—the word balloons blocked out too much of the art. Apart from that the story was decidedly bland, like nothing there.

The last story, the Roy Krenkel tribute, was rather nice. Yeates' nostalgic art was very pleasing as was Jones' story. Not quite as grand as the lead story but very satisfying nonetheless.

I know that you are against continued stories, but how about devoting a whole issue to one story—or the story in two issues—so we can have more characterization, plot development, and grander ideas. Surely, at the moment your present situation limits your horizons and most stories have to end with a comic equivalent of a punch-line. Despite the good stories—having to write 3 or 4 a month leads to some pretty vacant stories e.g. "Pi in the Sky." So, how about it? Well, that's about it for now, keep up the good work.

Yours sincerely,
Nick Goodes
11 Vicars Oak Road
Uppernorwood
London, England

Dear Bruce,

I am not a writer, so I will not comment on the stories in *Alien Worlds*. I am not an artist, so I will not comment on the artwork in *Alien Worlds*. But I am a reader, and I would like to say *Alien Worlds* is good reading.

And, if I may make a suggestion, I would like to see pictures of the various artists on the inside cover of *Alien Worlds* and *Twisted Tales*. It is aggravating seeing the name of Ploog or Stevens in many publications and not know what they look like.

By the way, I'm all for a fantasy anthology book.

Keith Drawbaugh
4003 Old Orchard Road
York, PA 17402

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PLANET PERFICT

THE SILVERY, BULLET-SHAPED SPACE CRUISER SKIMMED SMARTLY ACROSS THE INKY VOID, CLOSING RAPIDLY ON THE SHIMMERING BLUE-GREEN SPHERE BELOW. INSIDE THE SHIP'S ALLOY HULL, PROFESSOR ROBERT GREYMAN AND BIO-GENETICS STUDENT BERT ANDERSON STOOD BEFORE THE CIRCULAR VIEWPORT AND GAZED EXCITEDLY AT THE MAN-MADE WORLD SWIMMING UP TO THEM...

THERE SHE IS, ANDERSON! YA-HOO! JUST LOOK AT HER! PERFECT! SHE'S PERFECT! AN EXACT DUPLICATE OF EARTH-- WITH A FEW NOTABLE EXCEPTIONS, THAT IS. I'VE DONE IT LAD! I'VE SUCCEEDED! AND THEY LAUGHED AT ME AT CAL TECH!



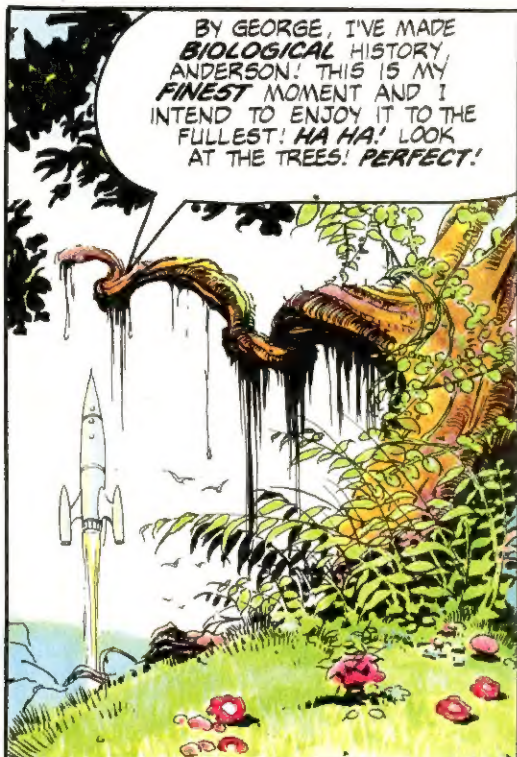
TAKE IT EASY, PROFESSOR...WE HAVEN'T LANDED YET. IT MAY ONLY LOOK PERFECT FROM UP HERE.

NONSENSE! I'VE SUCCEEDED. CAN'T YOU *FEEL* IT? TWENTY YEARS IT TOOK TO GROW FROM THE TIME WE PLANTED THE FIRST SEEDS IN '62. NOW LOOK AT HER! LOOK AT HER! HA HA! I DID IT!

BETTER STRAP IN FOR LANDING, PROFESSOR...



BY GEORGE, I'VE MADE BIOLOGICAL HISTORY, ANDERSON! THIS IS MY *FINEST* MOMENT AND I INTEND TO ENJOY IT TO THE FULLEST! HA HA! LOOK AT THE TREES! PERFECT!

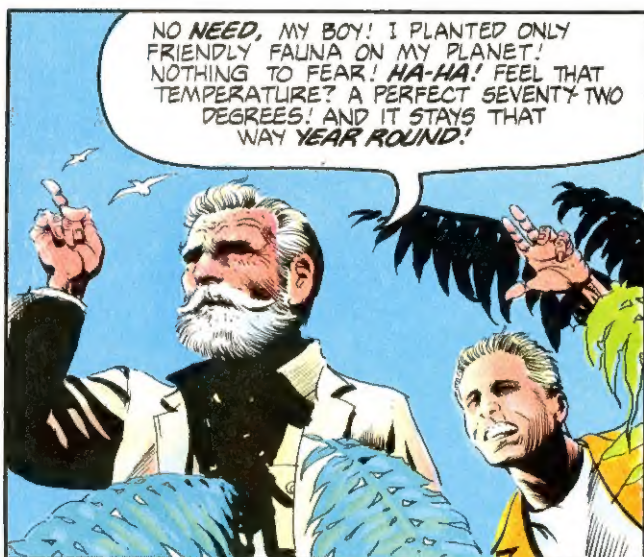


STORY: BRUCE JONES PENCILS: JIM SULLIVAN INKS: ARTHUR SUYDAM
Letters: Carrie McCarthy Colors: Steve Oliff



AH-H-H! SMELL THAT AIR, ANDERSON! 100% PURE! THAT'S WHAT NON-POLLUTED PHOTO-SYNTHESIS WILL GIVE YOU. LOOK AT THAT FLORA--EVERY LEAF A MASTERPIECE! I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE THE ANIMAL LIFE!

AREN'T YOU TAKING A SIDEARM, PROFESSOR?



NO NEED, MY BOY! I PLANTED ONLY FRIENDLY FAUNA ON MY PLANET! NOTHING TO FEAR! **HA-HA!** FEEL THAT TEMPERATURE? A PERFECT SEVENTY-TWO DEGREES! AND IT STAYS THAT WAY **YEAR ROUND!**



LOOK **HERE, SON!** A **LEPUS JUCARUNDI!** ONLY THE MOST DELICATE, THE MOST AROMATIC FLOWERS FOR MY PLANET! IT'S A PARADISE, ANDERSON, A VIRTUAL **PARADISE!**

YEAH, SWELL... ONLY I SORTA MISS THE **BARS** ON ALPHA 5...



BAH! ALPHA 5 INDEED! **FILTHY** PLACE! NOTHING BUT EXHAUST FUMES, FACTORY SMOKE, CROWDED STREETS, AND...

--**FLIES!** OH GOD **NO! FLIES!** ANDERSON, **FLIES!**

YEAH? SO?



I DIDN'T **PLANT** THEM! I DIDN'T **WANT** THEM! I **HATE** FLIES! I CREATED THIS PLANET TO GET **AWAY** FROM FLIES! IT'S **RUINED!** IT'S ALL **RUINED!**

SO WHAT'S A FEW FLIES? SEEMS KINDA... **NATURAL** TO ME, Y' KNOW?

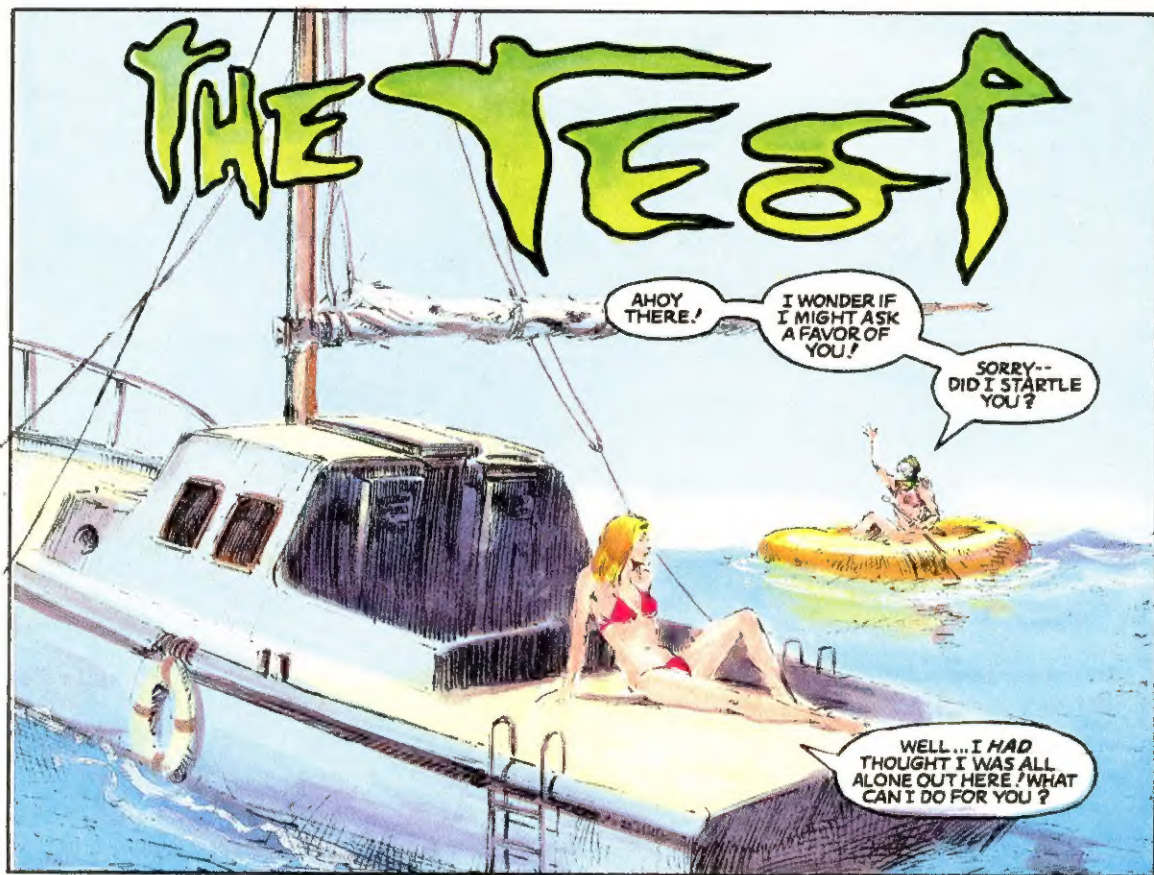


THEY MUST HAVE BEEN IN THE **SHIP** DURING THAT FIRST SEEDING... I MUST HAVE BROUGHT THEM **WITH** ME BY ACCIDENT FROM EARTH...

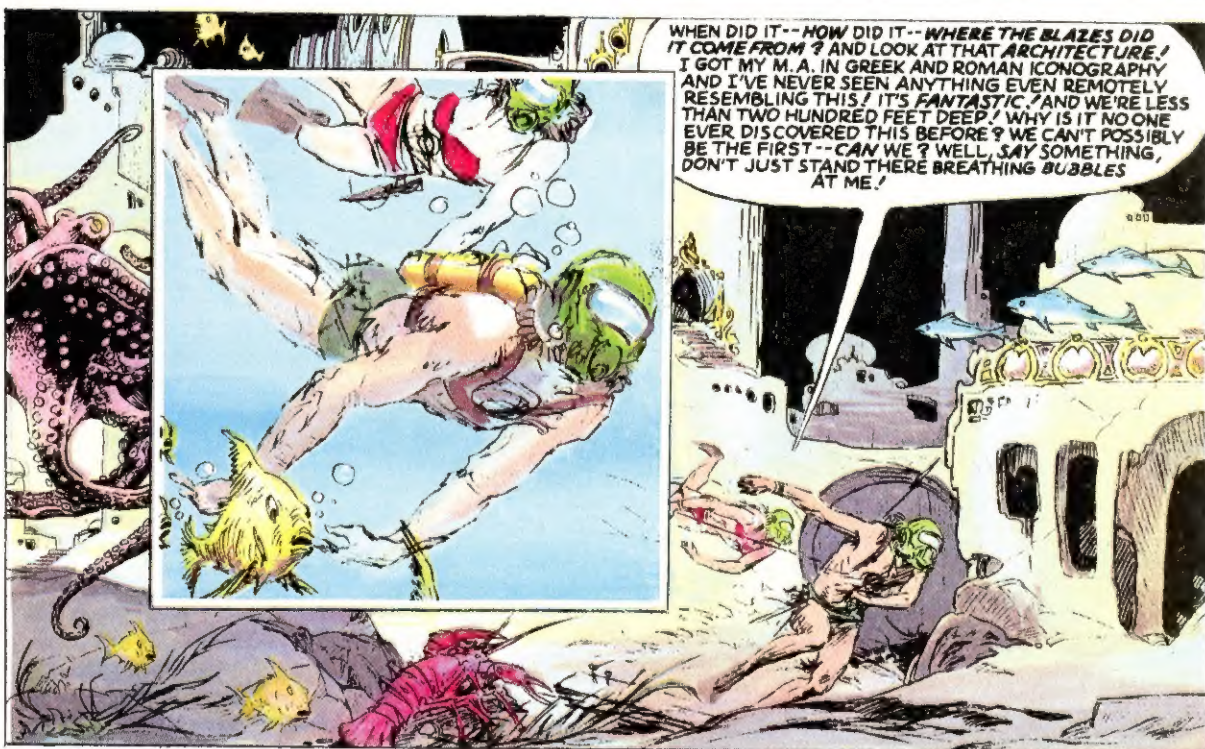
LOOK ON THE **BRIGHT** SIDE, PROFESSOR: AT LEAST THEY HAVEN'T **TAKEN OVER!** SOMETHING MUST BE EATING THEM, WHICH MEANS YOUR PLANET IS **EVOLVING** JUST LIKE YOU WANTED IT TO! YOU'RE STILL A **SUCCESS!**



THE TEST



STORY: BRUCE JONES ART: ROY G. KRENKEL FRAMING SEQUENCE: VAL MAYERIK
Colors: Joe Chiodo Letters: Cody



OKAY, HOW'S THIS: IT RISES OUT OF THE MURKY PAST ONCE EVERY CENTURY, LIKE BRIGADOON...

GREAT, RICK, YOU CAN GO BACK TO YOUR RUBBER RAFT NOW.

WELL, YOU GOT A BETTER THEORY? I'LL GO YOU ONE BETTER: LOOK AT THE FACADES OF THOSE BUILDINGS-- IN ONLY A FEW YEARS THEY'D NORMALLY BE COVERED WITH LICHEN AND BARNACLES--

YOU'RE RIGHT...

SMOOTH AS GLASS AND AS NEW AS IF THEY WERE BUILT LAST WEEK! THIS IS AMAZING, RICK, THIS IS TERRIFIC! THIS IS--

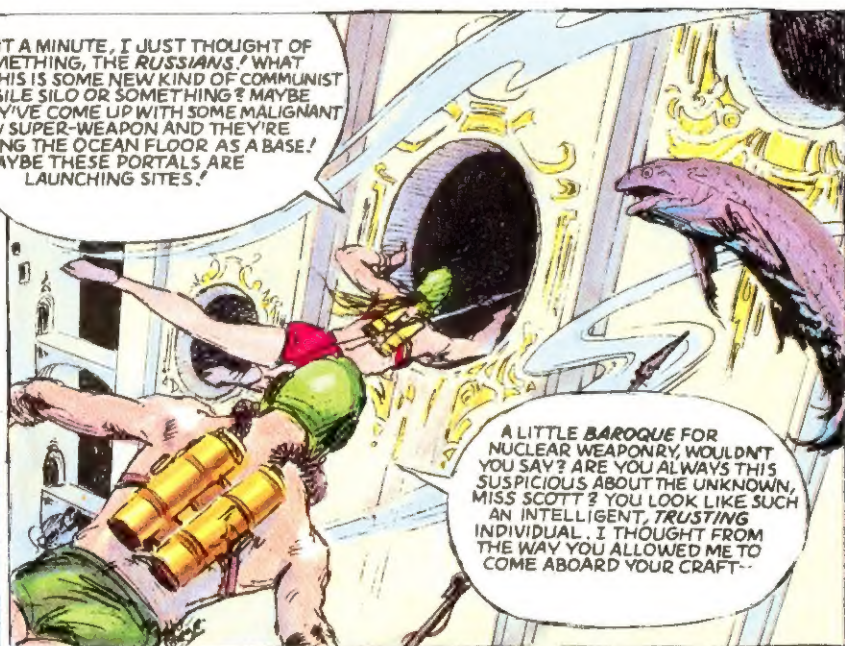
BEAUTIFUL? UNTOUCHED? PURE? MAYBE WE OUGHT TO GET OUR LITTLE FLIPPERS OUT OF HERE BEFORE SOMEONE UPSTAIRS SPOTS YOUR BOAT AND DECIDES TO PUT A McDONALDS DOWN HERE...

I GUESS THIS MEANS "NO"...

LEAVE? ARE YOU NUTS? I DON'T KNOW ABOUT YOU, BUSTER, BUT IT'S NOT EVERY DAY I GET TO PLAY COLUMBUS!

AMANDA'S ANSWER COMES IN A GIDDY BURST OF BUBBLES AS SHE KICKS EXCITEDLY TOWARD ONE OF THE MAIN PARAPETS OF THE VAST CYCLODEAN LABYRINTH, URGING HER NEW-FOUND FRIEND ONWARD WITH IMPATIENT WAVES OF HER ARM...

WAIT A MINUTE, I JUST THOUGHT OF SOMETHING, THE RUSSIANS! WHAT IF THIS IS SOME NEW KIND OF COMMUNIST MISSILE SILO OR SOMETHING? MAYBE THEY'VE COME UP WITH SOME MALIGNANT NEW SUPER-WEAPON AND THEY'RE USING THE OCEAN FLOOR AS A BASE! MAYBE THESE PORTALS ARE LAUNCHING SITES.



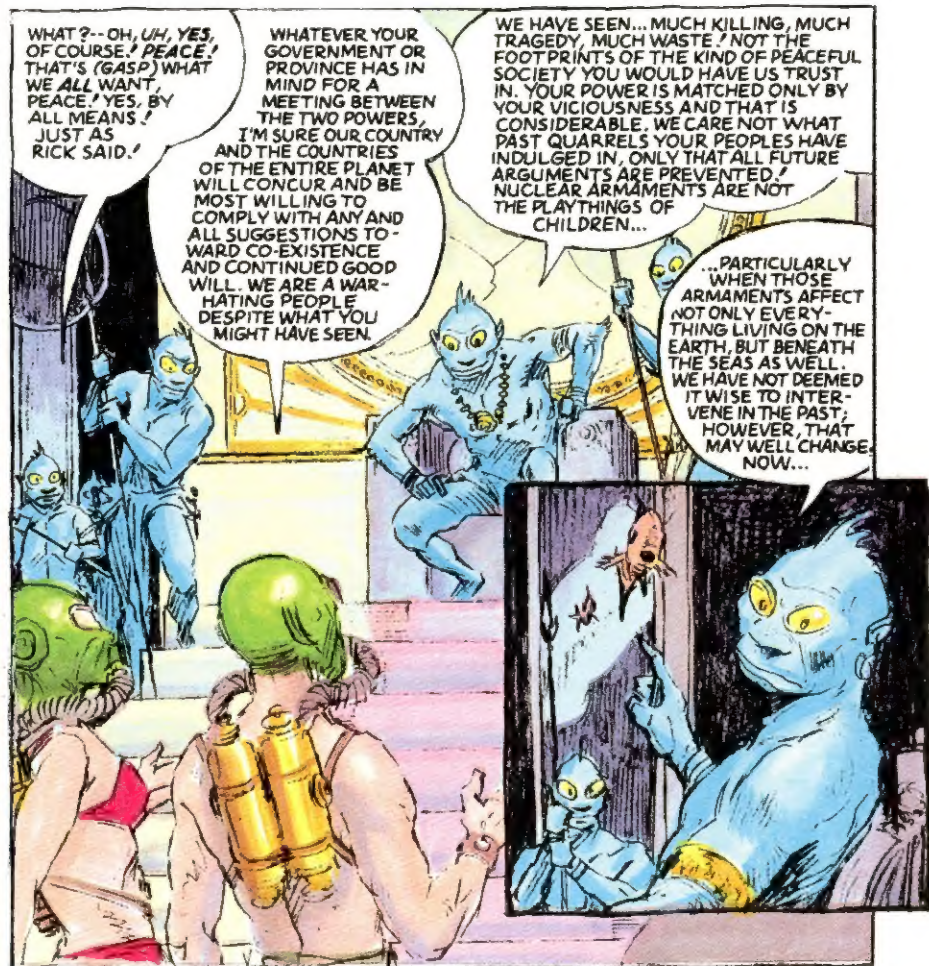
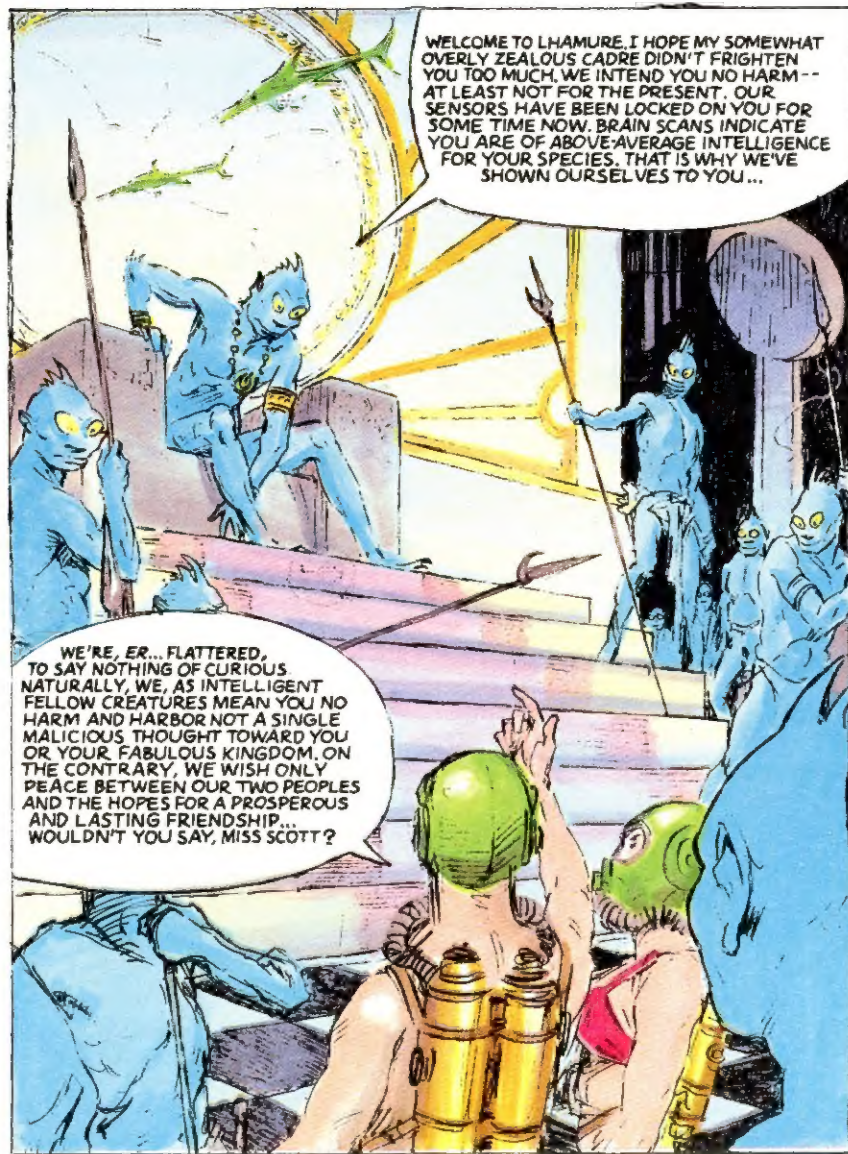
INTELLIGENT, YES. TRUSTING--? WHO DO YOU THINK YOU CAN REALLY TRUST THESE DAYS, RICK? LOOK, I DON'T ENJOY BEING SKEPTICAL--I DIDN'T INVENT ATOMIC WARFARE--BUT IT'S HERE AND THE NEUROSIS GOES WITH IT!

A LITTLE BAROQUE FOR NUCLEAR WEAPONRY, WOULDN'T YOU SAY? ARE YOU ALWAYS THIS SUSPICIOUS ABOUT THE UNKNOWN, MISS SCOTT? YOU LOOK LIKE SUCH AN INTELLIGENT, TRUSTING INDIVIDUAL. I THOUGHT FROM THE WAY YOU ALLOWED ME TO COME ABOARD YOUR CRAFT--



AMANDA! DON'T FIGHT THEM! YOU'LL TEAR LOOSE YOUR AIR-HOSE! JUST RELAX! LET THEM TAKE US! ONCE THEY GET CALMED DOWN, I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO TO REASON WITH THEM! DON'T WORRY--I'M HERE!







AS IMPRESSIVE AS YOUR POWER IS, IT PALES IN THE FACE OF OUR CAPACITY FOR DESTRUCTION. WE COULD EASILY VAPORIZE THE ENTIRE SURFACE IN A MATTER OF SECONDS-- WE WILL DO SO IF NECESSARY. WHAT WE PROPOSE AS AN ALTERNATIVE IS A SIMPLE TEST OF FAITH. YOU TWO HAVE BEEN CHOSEN AS MINISTERS OF THAT TRUST: TWO TYPICAL, INTELLIGENT REPRESENTATIVES OF YOUR SPECIES. WE WILL RELEASE YOU, SET YOU FREE. YOU NEED ONLY REMAIN SILENT WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF OUR PRESENCE FOR THREE DAYS. THAT IS ALL. IF NO MOVE HAS BEEN MADE AGAINST US IN THAT TIME, WE WILL CONSIDER YOUR RACE WORTHY OF FUTURE NEGOTIATIONS. IF NOT-- THE WORLD AS YOU KNOW IT WILL END. THAT IS OUR PROPOSAL. WE THINK IT A FAIR ONE. WE DO NOT ASK YOU TO TRUST US, ONLY TO BE YOURSELVES TRUSTWORTHY. WHAT SAY YOU? MISS SCOTT?



WELL, I-- YES, I SUPPOSE THAT'S OKAY-- THAT IS, I MEAN, IT SOUNDS REASONABLE... WOULDN'T, UH, YOU SAY SO, UH, RICK?

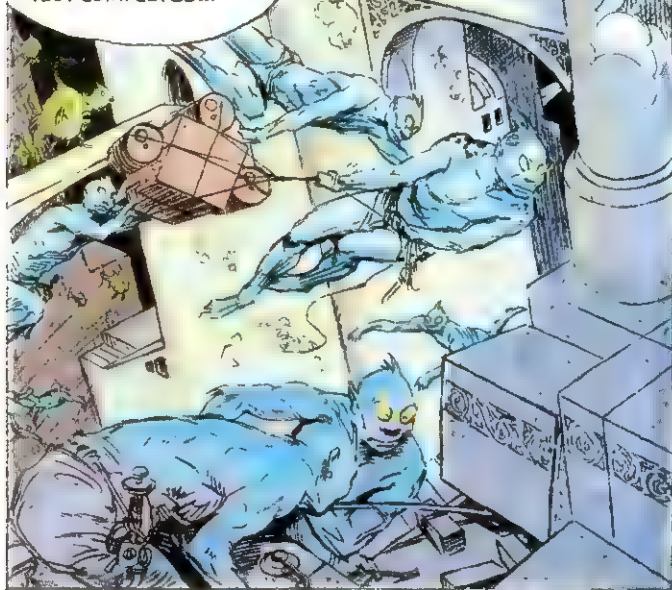
I'D SAY IT SOUNDS MORE THAN FAIR! AND I FOR ONE CAN PROMISE YOU THAT IT'S A TRUST THAT WON'T BE BROKEN! THIS COULD BE THE FIRST STEP TOWARD UNITING NOT ONLY YOUR PEOPLE AND MINE, BUT ALL THE PEOPLES OF THE EARTH! THIS IS LIKE A DREAM COME TRUE!



"A DREAM I PRESUME YOU SURFACE-DWELLERS WILL NOT ALLOW TO BE TURNED INTO A NIGHTMARE. FOR, MARK MY WORD, OUR REPLY TO ANY DECEIT WILL BE AS SWIFT AS IT IS TERRIBLE... DESTRUCTION ON A SCALE OF WHICH YOUR RACE HAS SCARCELY DREAMED. OUR INVISIBILITY DOWN THROUGH THE YEARS IS PROOF OF OUR TECHNICAL SUPERIORITY. WHILE IT IS TRUE OUR HOME IS IN THE SEA, WE ARE NOT INCAPABLE OF TRAVELING QUITE COMFORTABLY ON LAND... AND MAKING IT OUR OWN..."

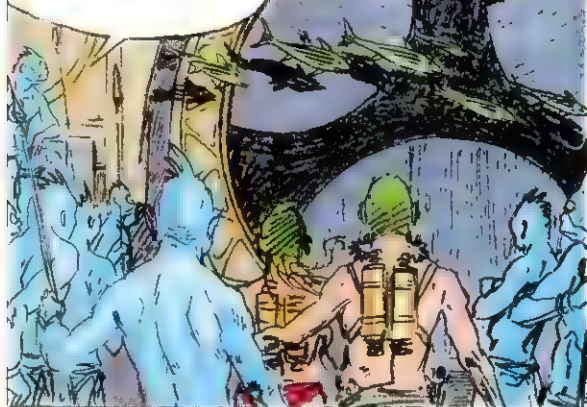
EVEN AS WE SPEAK, INVISIBLE SQUADRONS OF MY PEOPLE ARE DEPLOYING MEGA-WEAPONS IN EVERY CORNER OF EVERY OCEAN IN THE WORLD. AT A MOMENT'S NOTICE THEY CAN BE RELEASED IN ONE GREAT WAVE OF CHAOS THAT WILL LITERALLY WASH YOUR SPECIES FROM THE PLANET. UNLIKE YOUR PUNY THERMONUCLEAR WEAPONS, OURS VAPORIZE IMMEDIATELY ONLY THOSE TARGETS INTENDED; LEAVING ALL OTHER LIFE FORMS, ANIMAL AND VEGETABLE, VIRTUALLY UNHARMED. NATURALLY, ALL RECORDS OF YOUR HISTORY, ART AND SCIENCES WILL REMAIN INTACT AS WELL, THAT WE MIGHT MAKE A THOROUGH STUDY OF CREATURES WHO CAN REACH SUBLIMELY SOPHISTICATED LEVELS IN SOME AREAS WHILE SIMULTANEOUSLY ENGAGING IN THE NEANDERTHAL ACTIVITIES OF WAR...

I HOPE THE TWO OF YOU REALIZE THE EXTENT OF YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES IN THIS TEST OF FAITH; YOU WILL BE ACTING AS SPOKESMEN FOR AN ENTIRE WORLD... YOUR DECISION WILL AFFECT THE FUTURE OF VIRTUALLY EVERY LIVING HUMAN ABOVE US... A HEAVY BURDEN TO BE PLACED UPON EVEN THE BROADEST OF SHOULDERS. WE THEREFORE OFFER YOU THE OPPORTUNITY TO SHIFT THIS RESPONSIBILITY ELSEWHERE IF YOU SO DESIRE, ON THE CONDITION, OF COURSE THAT YOU REMAIN WITH US UNTIL THE NEW COUPLE IS CHOSEN AND THE TEST COMPLETED...



YOU MAY GO, RETURN TO THE UPPER WORLD AND REMEMBER OUR AGREEMENT: YOU WILL TELL NO ONE OF OUR EXISTENCE FOR THREE FULL DAYS. AFTER WHICH ONE OF OUR PEOPLE WILL CONTACT YOU.

GO IN PEACE...

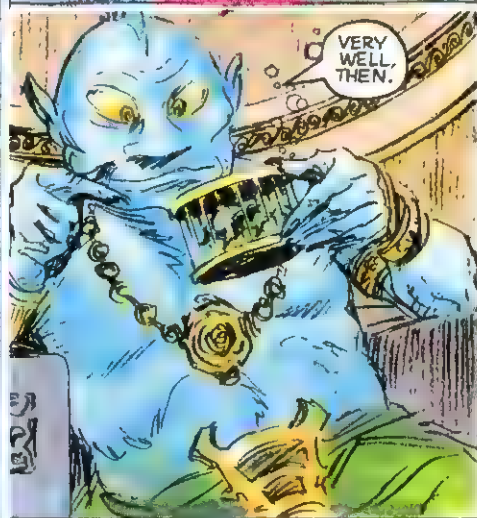


N-NO! WE WANT THE RESPONSIBILITY! DON'T WE RICK?

OF COURSE.

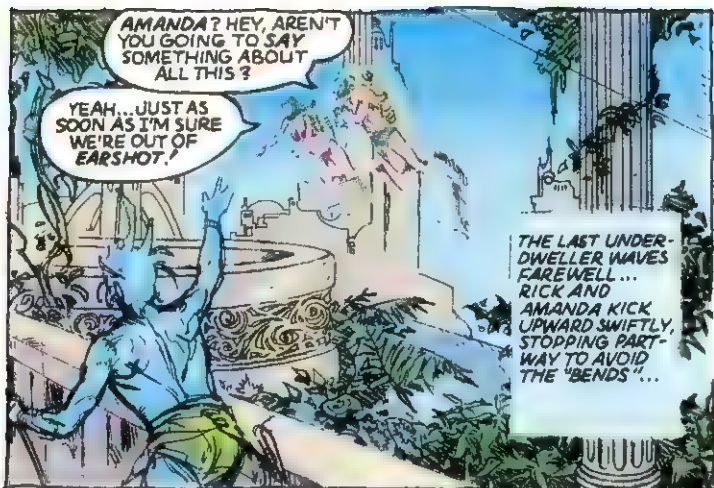


VERY WELL, THEN.



EXTRAORDINARY! WELL I GUESS WE CAN TELL OUR GRANDCHILDREN ABOUT THIS ONE, HUH? THANK HEAVENS THEY'RE A BENIGN SOCIETY! OTHERWISE WE WOULDN'T STAND A CHANCE! JUST THINK OF ALL THOSE WEAPONS IN ALL THOSE OCEANS AIMED AT OUR CITIES! MAKES YOUR SKIN CR-- AMANDA? WHAT'S THE MATTER?

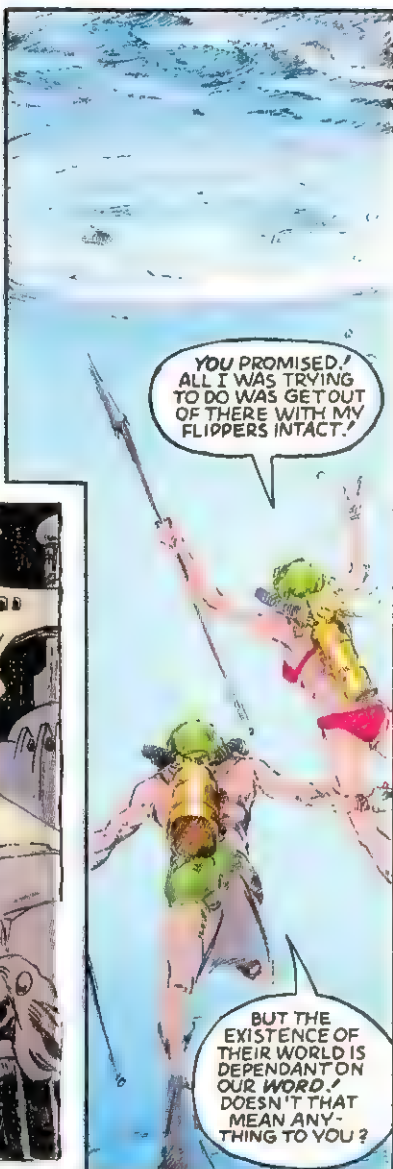




AMANDA? HEY, AREN'T YOU GOING TO SAY SOMETHING ABOUT ALL THIS?

YEAH...JUST AS SOON AS I'M SURE WE'RE OUT OF EARSHOT!

THE LAST UNDER-DWELLER WAVES FAREWELL... RICK AND AMANDA KICK UPWARD SWIFTLY, STOPPING PART-WAY TO AVOID THE "BENDS"...



YOU PROMISED! ALL I WAS TRYING TO DO WAS GET OUT OF THERE WITH MY FLIPPERS INTACT!

BUT THE EXISTENCE OF THEIR WORLD IS DEPENDANT ON OUR WORD! DOESN'T THAT MEAN ANYTHING TO YOU?



BUT WE PROMISED...

OKAY, YOU WANT MY OPINION? WE JUMP ON THAT LITTLE WHITE YACHT OF MINE AND GO STRAIGHT TO THE PRESIDENT! SUPERIOR WEAPONS INDEED! WHAT KIND OF SUPERIOR SOCIETY WOULD LIVE IN ANTIQUATED BUILDINGS LIKE THOSE? THEY'RE SCARED, RICK, THEY'RE TERRIFIED! AND FOR GOOD REASON! WE'RE GOING TO CAPTURE THE LOT OF THEM, AND WE'RE GOING TO DO IT BEFORE THE RUSSIANS OR THE CHINESE DO



DOESN'T THE FUTURE OF OUR WORLD MEAN ANYTHING TO YOU? JUST BECAUSE THEY TRUSTED US, DOES THAT MEAN WE SHOULD TRUST THEM? I SAY LET'S STRIKE WHILE THERE'S STILL TIME!

THEN YOU LIED TO THEM...



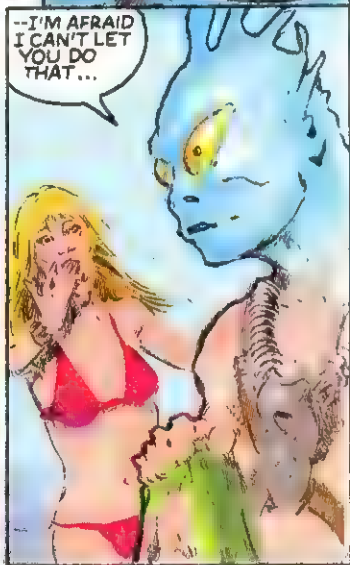
OF COURSE! THAT'S HOW THE STRONG SURVIVE! THAT'S HOW AMERICA BECAME THE PLACE IT IS TODAY! THAT'S WHY WE'LL ALWAYS WIN!

EVERYTHING YOU SAID WAS FALSE..



WE'VE GOT TO ALERT THE AUTHORITIES NOW, BEFORE THE RUSSIANS DISCOVER THE CITY!

NO AMANDA--



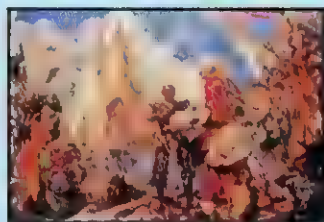
--I'M AFRAID I CAN'T LET YOU DO THAT...

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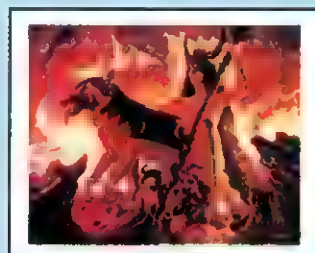
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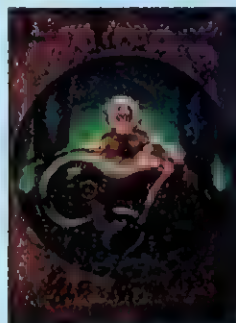


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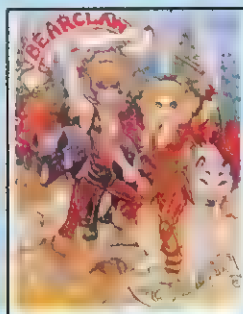
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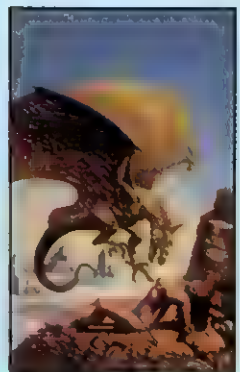
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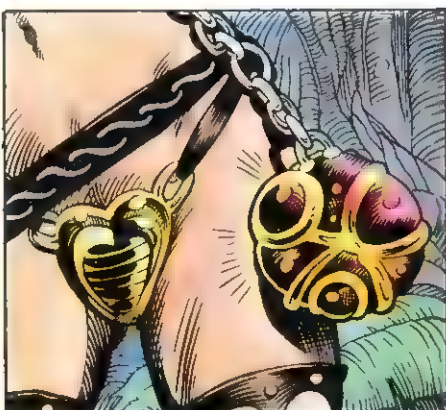
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PRIDE OF THE FLEET

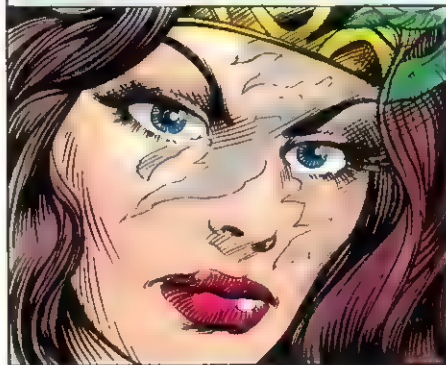
THE COLIFAX SHE WORE AT HER GIRDLE, AND SHE DIDN'T LIKE IT. IT PULLED THE WRONG WAY. IT HURT. IT LOOKED UGLY. THE **STUNKER** SHE HAD THROWN AWAY HOURS AGO. SHE COULD CLAIM LATER THAT SHE'D LOST IT IN THE UNDERBRUSH. IT WOULD COST HER, OF COURSE, BUT SHE'D RATHER PAY A FINE THAN BE HUMILIATED BY THE PRESENCE OF A STUNKER.

SHE WOULD HAVE THROWN AWAY THE COLIFAX, TOO, BUT IT HAPPENED TO BE WORTH SEVERAL MILLION CREDITS BASE VALUE AND MUCH MORE THAN THAT TO THE PRESTIGE OF COLONY SIX AND ITS COMMANDER. IF SHE HAD ANY INTENTION OF STAYING WITH THE FLEET, SHE HAD TO HANG ONTO THAT PARTICULAR PIECE OF EQUIPMENT.



ALL RIGHT, SHE'D PUT UP WITH IT. EVEN IF IT DID GET IN HER WAY, SLOW HER DOWN, AND (MOST IMPORTANTLY) UNFORGIVABLY DISFIGURE HER NEWLY-DESIGNED COMBAT UNIFORM. SHE'D PUT UP WITH IT.

BUT DAMNED IF SHE'D USE IT. SHE'D FLY THROUGH THE MESS ON A RECORD TIME AND BRING BACK HER MAN WITHOUT A SCRATCH--TO EITHER OF THEM. AND SHE DIDN'T NEED ANY NEW TECHNOLOGICAL WONDERS TO ACCOMPLISH IT. DANGERS? THREATS? SURE THERE WERE ALWAYS THESE...

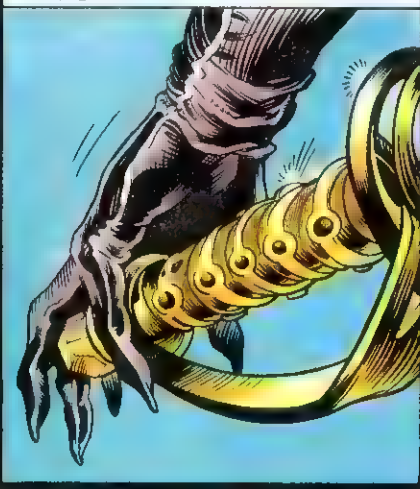


STORY: BRUCE JONES PENCILS: FRANK BRUNNER INKS: MIKE MIGNOLA
Colors: Joe Chiodo Letters: Carrie McCarthy

BUT SHE'D RUN INTO THEM BEFORE IN MORE JUNGLES ON MORE PLANETS THAN SHE COULD REMEMBER. SHE COULD HANDLE THEM. SHE HAD HER SWORD. HER SWORD...

SHE TOUCHED IT NOW LIGHTLY ON THE JEWELLED HILT AS SHE STEPPED OVER A MOSS-LADEN LOG, AND SHE COULDN'T SUPPRESS THE SMILE OF PRIDE TUGGING AT HER CHEEK. NOW HERE WAS A SWORD!...

HER UNIFORM MAY HAVE BEEN MERELY SHOWY, TRUE: THE FLAMING HAIR, MOISTURE-SOFT LIPS, DIAMOND STUDDED BOOTS--ALL DECORATION, ALL FOR EFFECT. GRANTED EVEN THE SWEEP AND DESIGN OF THE BLADE ITSELF MAY HAVE BEEN OPULENTLY HISTORIC--BUT THAT'S WHERE THE DRAMATICS ENDED...



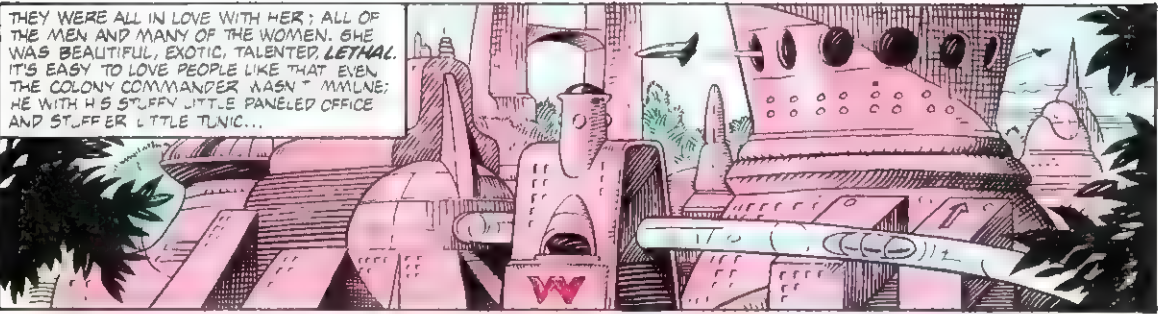
ONCE THAT EBONY GLOVED HAND WRAPPED AROUND THAT EBONY GRIP AND THE BLINDING SABRE-LENGTH SANG FROM ITS SCABBARD, ALL THE TINSEL ENDED, ALL THE GLITTER STOPPED. SHE WAS LIGHTNING. SHE WAS WHIRLWIND. SHE WAS BLUR--EVERYWHERE. HER OPPONENT SHOULD HAVE BEEN JUST ONE-TENTH OF A SECOND BEFORE HE GOT THERE...

SHE WAS SLASH AND GLEAM AND TERRIBLE WHINING, WIND-SCREAMING DEATH TILL HER ADVERSARIES GOT DIZZY JUST WATCHING AND PROBABLY NEVER FELT THE INCREDIBLE RAZOR INCISIONS, EVEN AFTER THE GROUND WAS SOAKING RED AROUND THEM AND THEIR KNEES WERE BUCKLING OF THEIR OWN ACCORD. OH, SHE WAS GOOD... SHE WAS THE BEST...

SHE KNEW IT, TOO, AND ENJOYED THE REPUTATION THAT WENT WITH IT. MEN WERE AT ONCE INTENSELY ENAMOURSED AND TERRIFIED OF HER. SHE SIMPLY COULD NOT BE BESTED WITH A SWORD--NOT AT COLONY SIX ANYWAY--AND IN A PLACE WHERE THE MEN OUTNUMBERED THE WOMEN THREE TO ONE WELL, IT MADE LIFE INTERESTING...

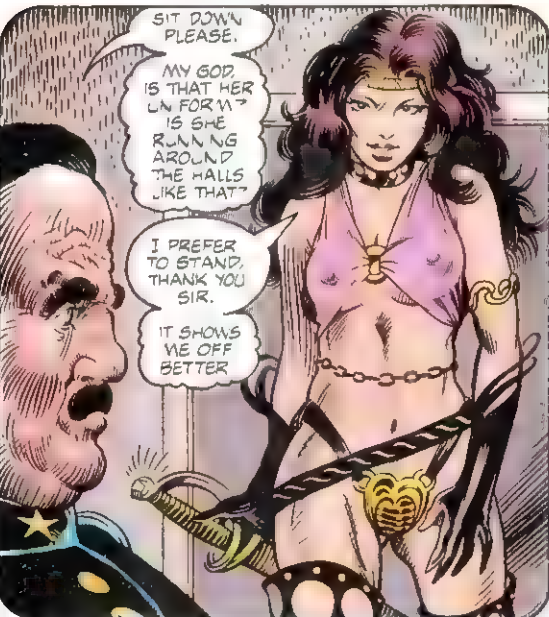


THEY WERE ALL IN LOVE WITH HER; ALL OF THE MEN AND MANY OF THE WOMEN. SHE WAS BEAUTIFUL, EXOTIC, TALENTED, **LETHAL**. IT'S EASY TO LOVE PEOPLE LIKE THAT. EVEN THE COLONY COMMANDER WASN'T IMMUNE; HE WITH HIS STUFFY LITTLE PANELED OFFICE AND STUFFY LITTLE TUNIC...



COME IN, SHEFFIELD, YES...

THANK YOU, SIR.



SIT DOWN PLEASE.

MY GOD, IS THAT HER UNIFORM? IS SHE RUNNING AROUND THE HALLS LIKE THAT?

I PREFER TO STAND, THANK YOU SIR.

IT SHOWS WE OFF BETTER.



AS YOU WISH...NOW, AH! AS YOU'VE NO DOUBT HEARD, WE'VE GOT AN ANOL AS OF LAST NIGHT, SHEFFIELD. A PRIVATE...UH...PAPER'S HERE SOMEWHERE...

LEAKWOOD SR.

LEAKWOOD, YES, PRIVATE LEAKWOOD ANOL AT 0728 HOURS...



OUR FIRST ANOL IN SEVEN YEARS, SHEFFIELD, MY FIRST EVER I DON'T LIKE IT. NOT A BIT. I WANT HIM BACK. I WANT HIM ALIVE. I WANT HIM RECYCLED.

YES SR.

IT'S A BLEMISH SHEFFIELD. YOU CAN APPRECIATE THAT.

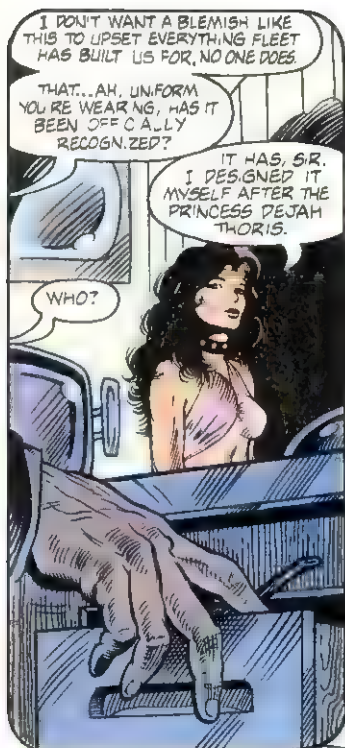
YES SR.



WE DON'T WANT BLEMISHES AT COLONY SIX. NO ONE DOES.

WE CAN RECTIFY THIS THING, SHEFFIELD! CLEARLY EFFICIENTLY. I KNOW WE CAN. WE HAVE THE TRAINING, THE FACILITY, THE MAN-POWER, THE EXPERTISE. WE'RE ONE OF THE BEST SHEFFIELD ONE OF THE VERY BEST I WANT US TO REMAIN THAT WAY.

NO SR.



I DON'T WANT A BLEMISH LIKE THIS TO UPSET EVERYTHING FLEET HAS BUILT US FOR, NO ONE DOES

THAT...AH, UNIFORM YOU'RE WEARING, HAS IT BEEN OFFICALLY RECOGNIZED?

IT HAS, SIR. I DESIGNED IT MYSELF AFTER THE PRINCESS DEJAH THORIS.

WHO?



DEJAH THORIS, A FICTIONAL CHARACTER CREATED BY EDGAR RICE BURROUGHS.

BURROUGHS..

A TWENTIETH CENTURY NOVELIST, S.R. HE'S ALL THE RAGE NOW.

DEAR LORD, WHAT THEY'RE PASSING THESE DAYS! YOU'LL WEAR SOMETHING LESS... REVEALING ON THE MISSION, OF COURSE.



SIR, I PREFER TO GO AS I AM. THIS WAS DESIGNED AS A COMBAT UNIFORM.

BUT THE... YOUR BOSOM, IT'S UNPROTECTED.

BARE BREASTS ARE NOT UNCOMMON ON CYL'S 4 LOW SIR.

I'M AWARE OF THAT, BUT SURELY...

SIR, I BELIEVE MY PRESENT UNIFORM WILL AFFORD ME WITH THE GREATEST AMOUNT OF COMFORT AND FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT AND THEREFORE SERVE AS THE BEST POSSIBLE ASSET TO MY ABILITIES AND THE SUBSEQUENT CAPTURE OF THE FUGITIVE...

...BUT THEN, SHE'D REHEARSED IT THIRTY OR FORTY TIMES BEFORE ENTERING HIS OFFICE. EVERY WOMAN AT COLONY SIX WAS JEALOUS OF HER ABILITY TO HANDLE THE COMMANDER. IF THEY ONLY REALIZED HOW SIMPLE IT WAS...HOW, UNDER ALL THE BRASS AND BLUFF, HE WAS JUST LIKE ALL MEN...



WHO'S THERE?

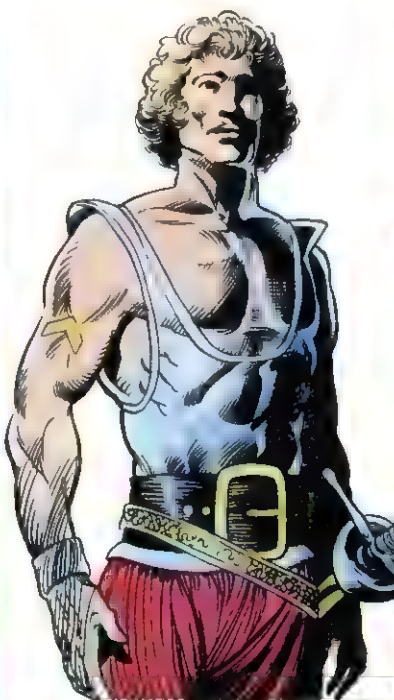


CLEVER, THAT SPEECH...

BY HIS UNIFORM SHE COULD SEE HE WAS A MEMBER OF FLEET BUT NOT OF COLONY SIX, AND COLONY SIX HAD EXCLUSIVE PRIVILEGES ON THIS PLANET. COULD THIS BE ANOTHER ANOL FROM ANOTHER COLONY? SHE STRODE POLITELY, CONFIDENTLY UP TO HIM AND TOOK IN HIS BEARING WITH A SINGLE SWEEP OF HER CRITICAL EYES...



TALL, HUSKY, YELLOW FLEET STRIPE ON HIS ARM LIKE HERS, BUCCANEER PANTS AND BOOTS (VERY VOGUE THESE DAYS) TANK TOP, SERIES SEVEN SWORD, NO STUNNER, UNNATURALLY CURLY HAIR, THAT LAST ITEM WAS EGOCENTRIC. ANY MAN WHO HAD HIS HAIR SET REGULARLY WAS OBVIOUSLY GLUED ON HIMSELF...



THIS GUY WAS PROBABLY INTO AN ERROL FLYNN THING (ALSO VERY VOGUE THESE DAYS). IT COULD BE ALL SWAGGER BUT THEN SHE WAS FLAMBOYANT TOO AND SHE WAS **GOOD**! IT WAS ALWAYS WISE TO BE PRUDENT EVEN IF YOU **WERE** THE BEST...



I'M SHEFFIELD, COLONY SIX ON FLEET APPREHENSION ORDERS. DO YOU WISH TO ASSIST?

NO.

SHE DIDN'T LIKE THE WAY HE SAID IT; SNOBBISH. SHE DIDN'T LIKE WHAT HIS MOUTH DID WHEN IT FORMED THE WORDS. BUT SHE WAS ON OFFICIAL BUSINESS, IN A HURRY. SHE'D GIVE HIM THE BENEFIT...

ARE YOU AWARE THAT THIS PLANET IS RESTRICTED TO COLONY SIX PERSONNEL?

IS THAT A FACT?

IT WAS THE WAY HE SAID IT AGAIN. OH, THIS WAS A REAL SMARTASS ALL RIGHT. THAT CONCEITED LITTLE PATRONIZING SMILE. PROBABLY A SEXIST TO BOOT. SHE KNEW SHE SHOULD GO ABOUT HER BUSINESS, LEAVE THIS JERK TO HIMSELF, BUT SHE HELP ADDING ONE LAST ITEM...

WHAT'S YOUR BUSINESS HERE?

I CAME TO BAG A RHUNK. WITH MY SWORD

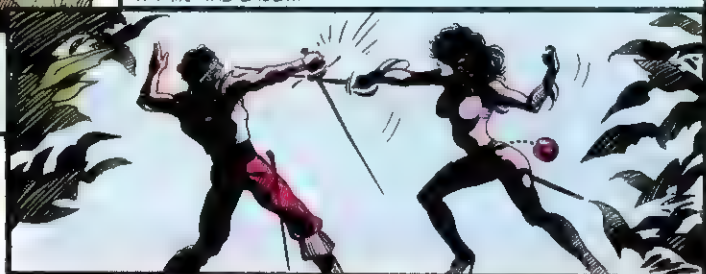
WITH HIS SWORD. CUTE THE WAY HE ADDED THAT AT THE END TO LET HER KNOW HE DIDN'T NEED A STUNNER TO KILL A RHUNK. OHH, A REAL SMARTASS ALL RIGHT...



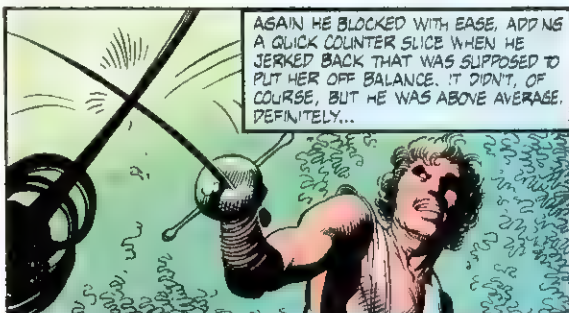
HER WORD, ORIENTAL, LIKE HER SWORDSMANSHIP, NEITHER WAS WIDELY KNOWN AND RARELY PRACTICED WHICH IS WHY SHE CHOSE THEM. HER SWORD SANG FROM ITS SCABBARD-SHINGGGG!-A PHENOMENON CAUSED BY THE FRICTION OF THE CUTTING EDGE RUNNING PAST TWO MINUTE WHEELED SHARPENERS EMPLOYED WITHIN THE CASE...

IT WAS WHAT SHE EXPECTED, "KLEVE" WAS ONE OF THE UNIVERSAL WORDS FOR "ON GUARD" FOLLOWED BY THE SWIFT UNSHEATHING OF THE CHALLENGER'S SWORD. EITHER SHE FOLLOWED SUIT NOW OR FACED RIDICULE...

HIS SWORD, SHE NOTICED, MADE A SOUND LIKE SHLUUNK! NO SHARPENERS. HE MIGHT BE FLAMBOYANT BUT HE WASN'T IN HER LEAGUE. SHE STEPPED IN IMMEDIATELY, NOT WASTING TIME, WITH A DELIBERATELY SLOWED ENGLISH SHOULDER THRUST, SACRIFICING STYLE NOW TO SEE WHAT HE COULD DO...



HE PARRIED NICELY--ANYONE COULD HAVE--BUT STILL, HIS MOVEMENTS WERE RAPID, SURE, EVEN ADMIRABLE. SHE PIVOTED NEXT, WENT LOW AND TRIED A CYPRANIAN VOLUPE TO THE SOLAR PLEXUS...



AGAIN HE BLOCKED WITH EASE, ADDING A QUICK COUNTER SLICE WHEN HE JERKED BACK THAT WAS SUPPOSED TO PUT HER OFF BALANCE. IT DIDN'T, OF COURSE, BUT HE WAS ABOVE AVERAGE, DEFINITELY...

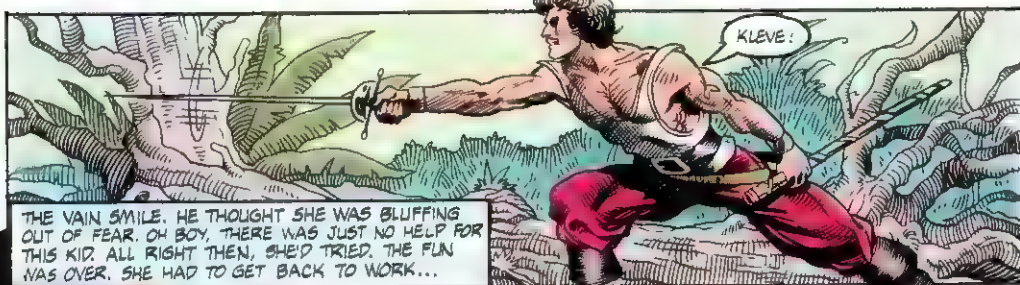
SHE PLAYED WITH HIM FOR A TIME, LETTING HIM GET IN A FEW FALSE SCORES UNTIL SHE KNEW HIS EVERY STRENGTH AND WEAKNESS. AND ALTHOUGH THE LATTER FAR OUTNUMBERED THE FORMER, SHE FOUND HIM A SPLENDID SWORDSMAN WITH THE POTENTIAL TO BE EVEN BETTER...IF HE DIDN'T SPEND ALL HIS TIME IN THE BEAUTY SALON. IT WOULD BE A PITY, SHE DECIDED, TO WASTE SOMEONE WHO COULD BE SO VALUABLE TO FLEET...



SHE STEPPED BACK, CLICKED HER HEELS TOGETHER AND POINTED HER SWORD HAND STIFFLY TO THE GROUND AT HER RIGHT SIDE. IT MEANT EITHER "I YIELD" OR "LET'S RECONSIDER."



YOU'RE A FINE SWORDSMAN. I DON'T WISH YOU HARM. LEAVE THE PLANET NOW AND I SEE NO REASON TO REPORT YOU...



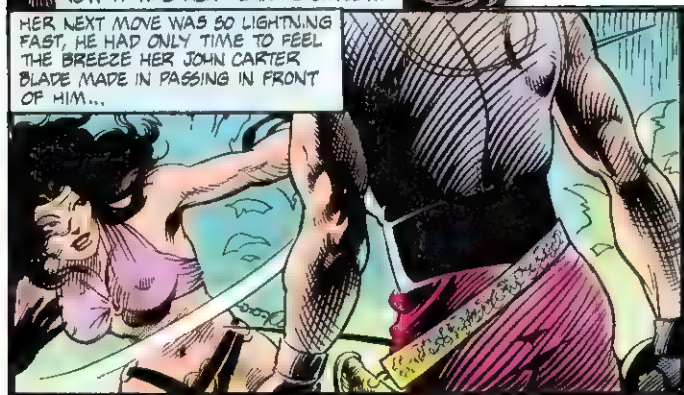
THE VAIN SMILE. HE THOUGHT SHE WAS BLUFFING OUT OF FEAR. OH BOY, THERE WAS JUST NO HELP FOR THIS KID. ALL RIGHT THEN, SHE'D TRIED. THE FUN WAS OVER. SHE HAD TO GET BACK TO WORK...



HHAN.

NOW IT WAS HER TURN TO SMILE...

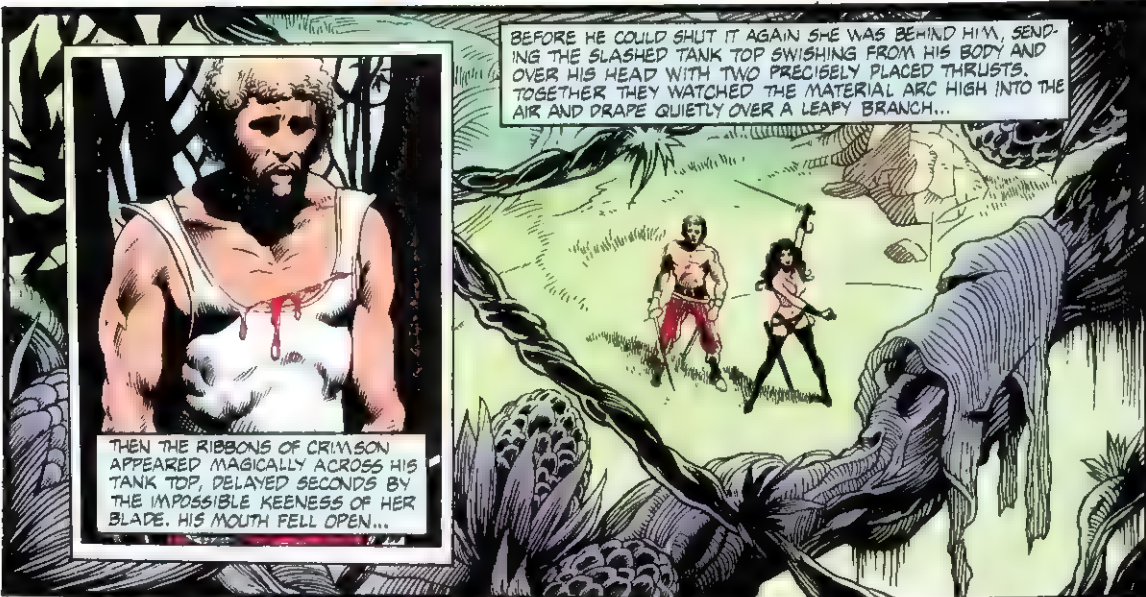
HER NEXT MOVE WAS SO LIGHTNING FAST, HE HAD ONLY TIME TO FEEL THE BREEZE HER JOHN CARTER BLADE MADE IN PASSING IN FRONT OF HIM...



SHE SLOWLY, EVER SO CALMLY DREW THE SWORD LEVEL TO AND HORIZONTAL WITH HER BREASTS. IT WAS A MANUEVER SHE SAVORED THEY WERE SPLENDID BREASTS, LARGE AND ROUND AND PINK-NIPPLE FIRM. FEW MEN COULD WATCH THEM AND THE SWORD SIMULTANEOUSLY. HE WAS NO EXCEPTION...



HE STARTED TO COUNTER BUT SHE WAS FROZEN NOW AT THE COMPLETION OF HER THRUST. STARING FIXEDLY AT HIS CHEST. BUT SHE HAD MISSED. HE GLANCED DOWN AT HIMSELF. HE'D FELT NOTHING!



BEFORE HE COULD SHUT IT AGAIN SHE WAS BEHIND HIM, SENDING THE SLASHED TANK TOP SWISHING FROM HIS BODY AND OVER HIS HEAD WITH TWO PRECISELY PLACED THRUSTS. TOGETHER THEY WATCHED THE MATERIAL ARC HIGH INTO THE AIR AND DRAPE QUIETLY OVER A LEAFY BRANCH...

THEN THE RIBBONS OF CRIMSON APPEARED MAGICALLY ACROSS HIS TANK TOP, DELAYED SECONDS BY THE IMPOSSIBLE KEENNESS OF HER BLADE. HIS MOUTH FELL OPEN...

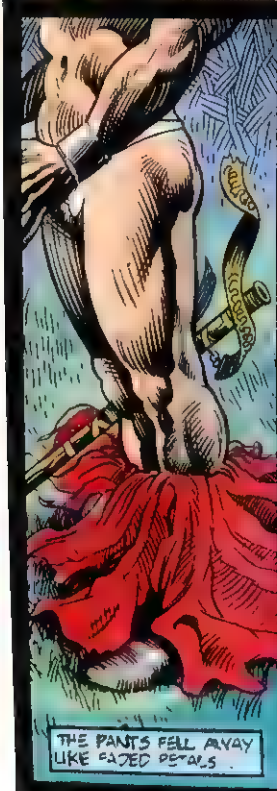
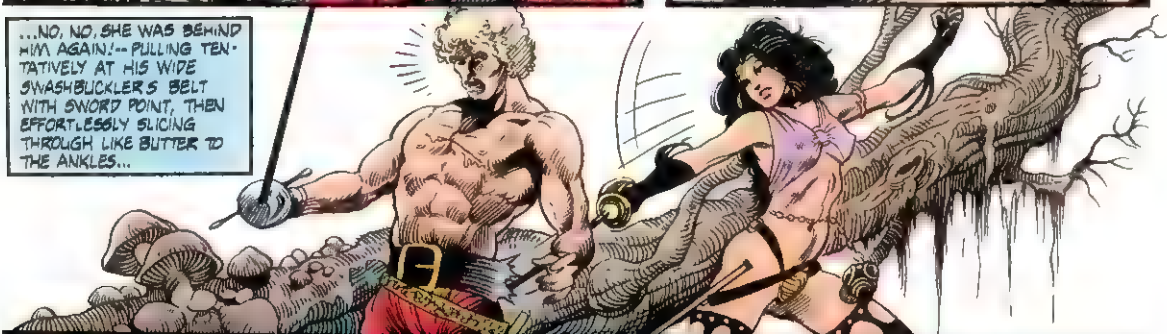
WHEN HE WHIRLED IN HUMILIATED FURY AT HER, SHE WAS GONE, PIROUETTING GRACEFULLY TO HIS RIGHT...



...NO. TO HIS LEFT...

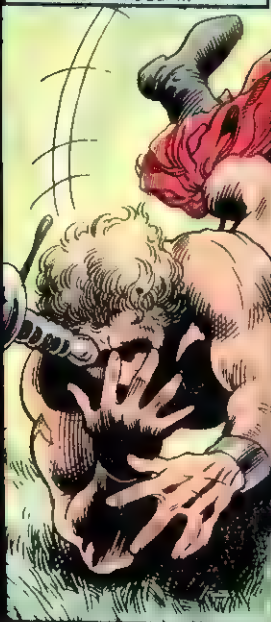


...NO, NO, SHE WAS BEHIND HIM AGAIN!--PULLING TENTATIVELY AT HIS WIDE SWASHBUCKLER'S BELT WITH SWORD POINT, THEN EFFORTLESSLY SLICING THROUGH LIKE BUTTER TO THE ANKLES...



THE PANTS FELL AWAY LIKE FALLEN PETALS

THEN SHE FEIGNED TO THE RIGHT--HE FOLLOWED--AND THE PANTS BROUGHT HIM DOWN IN A CRASH AS SHE'D PLANNED. HE HAD TO LET GO HIS SWORD TO PREVENT IMPALING HIMSELF...



SHE KICKED THE SWORD AWAY AND STUCK HER OWN BLADE BENEATH HIS TERRIFIED CHIN. HIS ADAM'S APPLE MOVED CONVULSIVELY AND HE WAS SUDDENLY SWIMMING IN PERSPIRATION...



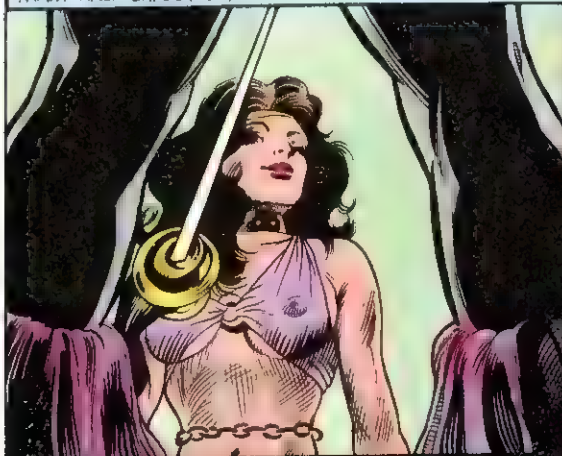
UP.

HE OBEYED IMMEDIATELY PROPELLED AIRLESSLY BY THE SINGING TIP OF THE MAGIC SWORD...

SHE STOOD GRINNING GRIMLY AT HIS NAKEDNESS, LETTING THE RAZOR POINT TRACE A TICKLY, NOT-QUIET-SKIN-PIERCING LINE DOWN HIS THROAT, CHEST, BELLY...



SHE LOWERED THE SWORD BETWEEN HIS LEGS AND COCKED HER HEAD SPECULATIVELY. SHE HAD CASTRATED ONLY ONE MAN BEFORE IN SWORDPLAY, ALTHOUGH IT WAS QUITE COMMONLY THE LOSER'S LOT AMONG FLEET SWORDSMEN; INDEED, MANY HAD EXPECTED IT...



BUT SHE FOUND LITTLE SATISFACTION IN NEEDLESSLY MAIMING SOMEONE OR IN THE RAPIDLY GROWING FAD OF "GATHERING NUTS." IN HER BOOK, YOU EITHER KILLED YOUR OPPONENT OUTRIGHT OR YOU LET HIM GO THE WAY HE CAME...

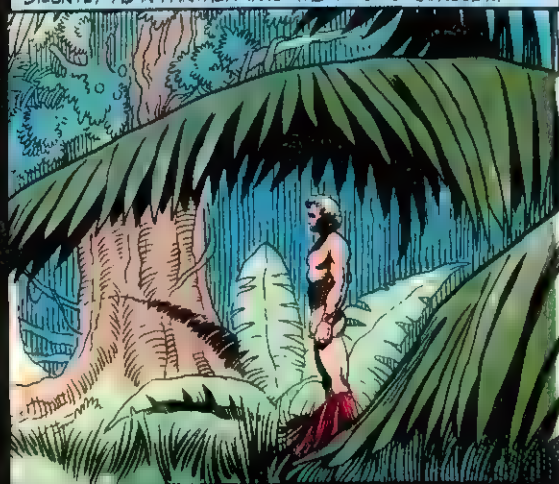


SHE LOOKED UP AT HIS DRIPPING FACE: HE CAUGHT HER GLANCE AND SQUEEZED HIS EYES SHUT, CLENCHING HIS TEETH...



TURN AROUND, PIG, WHILE I DECIDE HOW TO KILL YOU...

HE TURNED DRUNKENLY, LEGS CALCIFIED WITH FEAR, AND STOOD TREMBLING BEFORE THE SUN. HE WAS STANDING THERE STILL, AN HOUR LATER, LONG AFTER SHE HAD FADED SILENTLY AS A PANTHER INTO THE TANGLED JUNGLE...



ALONE IN THE FOREST AGAIN, SHE WAS STILL ON LEAKWOOD'S TRAIL AND STILL REMEMBERING WHAT THE COMMANDER SAID ABOUT HIM...



NOW THEN, SHEFFIELD, MY REPORTS SAY YOU KNEW THIS...AH...



LEAKWOOD, SIR.

...KNEW HIM PERSONALLY. IS THAT TRUE?



IT'S UNOFFICIALLY TRUE, YES SIR. "ACQUAINTED" IS, PERHAPS, A BETTER WORD. WE RAN INTO EACH OTHER AT THE LIBRARY, OCCASIONALLY AND HAD LUNCH TOGETHER ONCE OR TWICE.

ONCE OR TWICE.

TWICE.

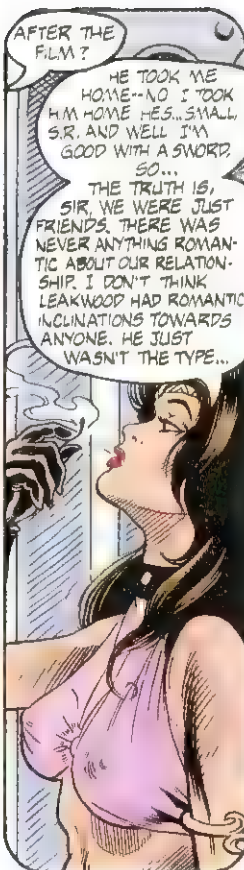


WHAT KIND OF LUNCHES SHEFFELD?

JUST... LUNCH, AT THE CAFETERIA.

I SEE. WHAT ELSE?

LET'S SEE... I BELIEVE HE TOOK ME TO THE MOVIES ONCE, YES SEVERAL MONTHS AGO.



AFTER THE FILM?

HE TOOK ME HOME--NO I TOOK HIM HOME YES... SMALL, S.R. AND WELL I'M GOOD WITH A SWORD, SO...

THE TRUTH IS, SIR, WE WERE JUST FRIENDS. THERE WAS NEVER ANYTHING ROMANTIC ABOUT OUR RELATIONSHIP. I DON'T THINK LEAKWOOD HAD ROMANTIC INCLINATIONS TOWARDS ANYONE. HE JUST WASN'T THE TYPE...



I SOCIALIZED WITH HIM BECAUSE I ENJOYED HIS COMPANY. I COULD RELAX AROUND HIM; HE LIKED ME FOR MY MIND. IT WAS NICE TO KNOW YOU WERE GOING TO SPEND A QUIET EVENING WITHOUT GETTING PHYSICAL ONCE IN AWHILE. LEAKWOOD DIDN'T HAVE MANY FRIENDS. HE'S SORT OF... FUNNY LOOKING, TO BE BLUNT. I FELT A LITTLE SORRY FOR HIM AND I KNEW HE LIKED MY PAYING ATTENTION TO HIM, ESPECIALLY AROUND THE COLONY SWORSMEN.



WAS HE A THIEF, SHEFFIELD? DID HE EVER STEAL ANYTHING TO YOUR KNOWLEDGE?

NOT THAT I'M AWARE OF, S.R.

WELL HE HAS NOW. SOMETHING EXTREMELY VALUABLE, EXTREMELY EXPENSIVE AND EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO COLONY SIX... I WANT IT BACK, SHEFFIELD...



UH... JUST WHAT WAS IT THAT LEAKWOOD STOLE? I WANT TO KNOW WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR

I'M SORRY, SHEFFIELD, I CAN'T PROVIDE YOU WITH THAT INFORMATION.

...C-CAN'T PROVIDE...



IT'S TOP SECRET, SHEFFIELD. EVERYTHING IN THIS COLONY IS TOP SECRET. THE OBJECT THIS MAN STOLE IS HIGHLY CONFIDENTIAL. I UNDERSTAND THERE ARE NO MORE THAT TWO OF THEM IN EXISTENCE AND BOTH OF THEM ARE HERE AT COLONY SIX--OR HERE HERE. I WANT IT BACK!

BUT SIR, IF I DON'T EVEN KNOW WHAT IT IS... HOW WILL I... I CAN I...

I WANT IT BACK, SHEFFIELD! THAT'S AN ORDER!!

SHE PAUSED FOR A MOMENT IN THE LEAFY GLEN AND ADJUSTED THE COLIFAX DANGLING AT HER HIP. IT PULLED THE WRONG WAY AS SHE WALKED AND IT WAS BEGINNING TO LEAVE BRUISES. SHE DETESTED IT; IT WAS HIDEOUSLY UGLY AND DETRACTED FROM THE LINES OF HER UNIFORM.

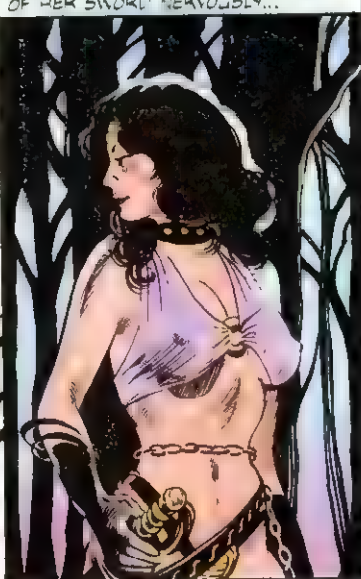
BUT THE COMMANDER HAD INSISTED THAT SHE TAKE IT. IT WAS, ACCORDING TO HIM, HER ONLY PRACTICAL DEFENSE AGAINST A RAMPAGING RHUNK. NO OTHER WEAPON HAD PROVEN TO BE THE LEAST BIT EFFECTIVE AGAINST WHAT WAS RUMORED TO BE AN ALL BUT INDESTRUCTIBLE CREATURE. CERTAINLY HER SWORD WOULD BE OF NO HELP--ACCORDING TO THE COMMANDER ANYWAY. BUT, OF COURSE, HER EGO WOULDN'T LET HER BELIEVE THIS. SHE DIDN'T BELIEVE THE CREATURE EXISTED THAT COULDN'T BE BROUGHT DOWN WITH A WELL-PLACED THRUST OF HER MARVELOUS SWORD--INCLUDING A FEW COLONY MALES WHO HAD BEEN FOOLISH ENOUGH TO COME UP AGAINST HER...

BUT TO HUMOR THE COMMANDER SHE'D TAKEN IT. IT WAS EITHER THAT OR GIVE UP THE ASSIGNMENT, AND SHE WOULDN'T HAVE PASSED THIS ONE UP FOR ANYTHING. THE PRESTIGE ALONE OF TRACKING A MAN IN AN UNCHARTED JUNGLE WAS WORTH IT, TO SAY NOTHING OF THE PROMOTION AND RAISE IN PAY SHE'D UNDOUBTEDLY EARN. IF LEAKWOOD WAS OUT THERE, SHE'D NAIL HIM...

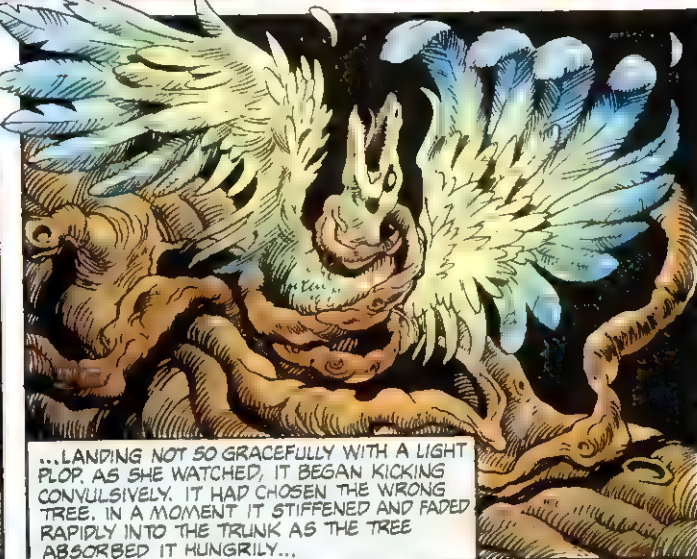
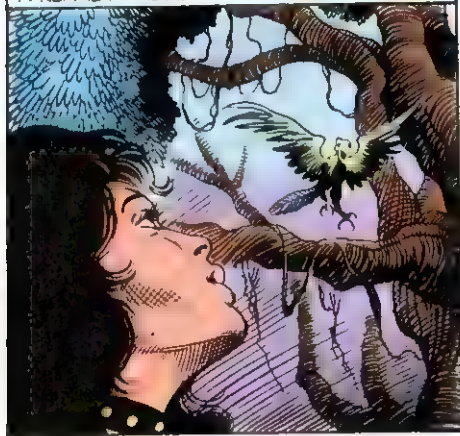
THE DANGLEFLIES WERE OUT, ZEROING IN ON HER LIKE AN ATTACKING AIR- FORCE. ROLLING THEIR CRYSTAL WINGS DELIRIOUSLY IN HER SWEAT GLANDS...

SHE FOUND A MILINAW BUSH WITHOUT EFFORT, BROKE ONE OF ITS BERRIES BETWEEN HER FINGERS, AND SPREAD THE GUSTENING OIL OVER HER LIMBS. THE DANGLEFLIES BLIZZED OFF RESENTFULLY...

THE GROUND BENEATH HER BOOTS GREW STEADILY SOFTER, DAMPER, AS IT ALWAYS DID TOWARD EVENING. THE RHUNKS WOULD BE PUSHING UP ANY TIME NOW. SHE FINGERED THE HILT OF HER SWORD NERVOUSLY...

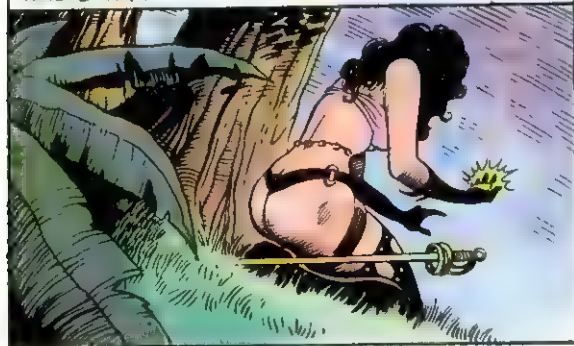


A STRANGE SPECIES OF LIZARD-BIRD SCREECHED ABRUPTLY ABOVE HER HEAD. SHE TWISTED AROUND AND CAUGHT SIGHT OF ITS YELLOW-BLUE FEATHERS SPIRALING SWIFTLY ACROSS THE MAJIVE SKY, ARROWING GRACEFULLY TO A NEARBY TREE...



...LANDING NOT SO GRACEFULLY WITH A LIGHT PLOP. AS SHE WATCHED, IT BEGAN KICKING CONVULSIVELY. IT HAD CHOSEN THE WRONG TREE. IN A MOMENT IT STIFFENED AND FADED RAPIDLY INTO THE TRUNK AS THE TREE ABSORBED IT HUNGRILY...

SHE KNELT DOWN BESIDE LEAKWOOD'S LATEST BOOTPRINT AND TOOK A READING WITH THE POCKET TRACKOMETER SNAPPED TO HER GIRDLE. TO HER AMAZEMENT, THE LITTLE RED NEEDLE HOVERED JUST OVER THE SEVEN-IN NUTE MARK...



LEAKWOOD MUST BE VERY CLOSE. ACCORDING TO HER RATE OF PURSUIT, HE MUST HAVE SLOWED CONSIDERABLY WITHIN THE LAST HOUR. ODD. HE COULDN'T HAVE TIRED THIS EARLY. WAS IT AN AMBUSH? OR HAD HE FINALLY COME TO HIS SENSES?

SHE PRODUCED A FOOD TAB FROM HER BELT AND CHEWED IT REFLECTIVELY. LEAKWOOD WAS A HARD ONE TO FIGURE ALL RIGHT; CAUTIOUS, INTROVERTIVE, RARELY TALKING AT ALL DURING THE FEW TIMES SHE'D BEEN WITH HIM. STILL, SHE COULDN'T BELIEVE HE'D DO HER ANY HARM. HE MAY NOT HAVE SHARED THE OTHER MEN'S PASSION FOR HER, BUT SHE'D ALWAYS SEEN AFFECTION IN HIS EYES...

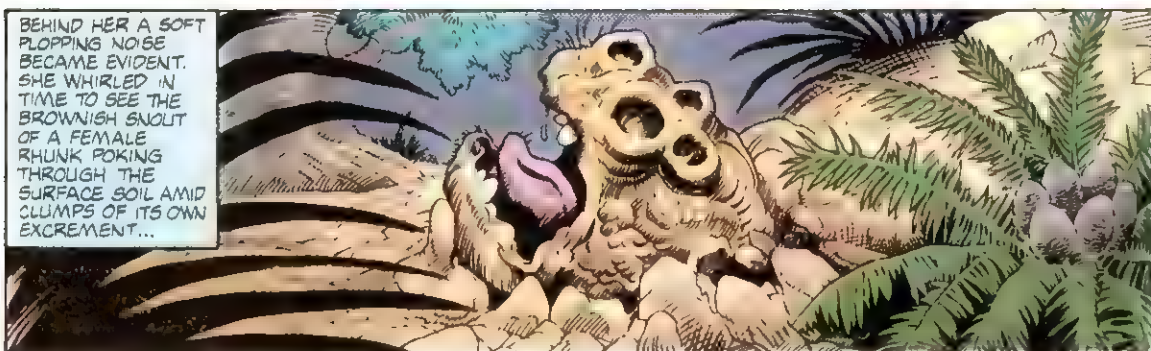


HE WAS AN ODD ONE, THOUGH...

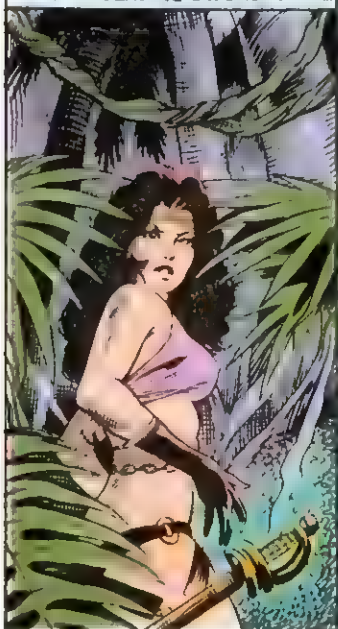


SHE TWITCHED SPASMODICALLY AS A PUNGENT ODOR ASSAILED HER NOSTRILS. HER NOSE WRINKLED IN REVULSION. SHE CAST ABOUT FOR THE SOURCE, RIGHT HAND GRIPPING THE DARK HILT OF HER BLADE...

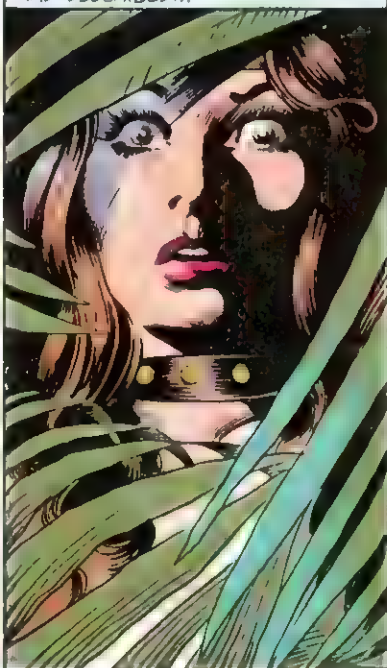
BEHIND HER A SFT PLOPPING NOISE BECAME EVIDENT. SHE WHIRLED IN TIME TO SEE THE BROWNISH SNOUT OF A FEMALE RHUNK POKING THROUGH THE SURFACE SOIL AMID CLUMPS OF ITS OWN EXCREMENT...



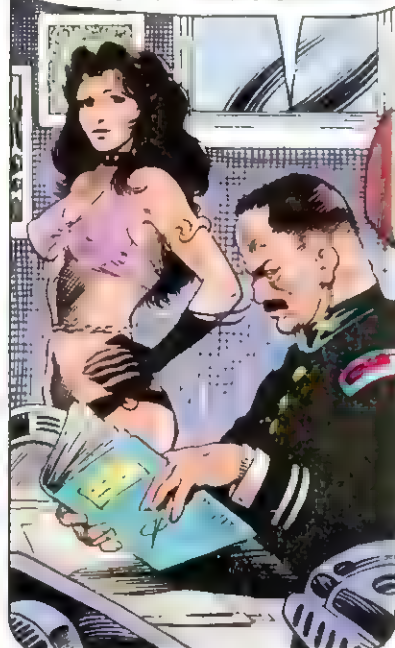
SHE STEPPED BACK GINGERLY, EYES RIVETED ON THE ENORMOUS BLOK-LIKE HEAD, TWITCHING EARS AND BLINKING YELLOW PUPILS. THE SMELL BECAME OVERPOWERING NOW. IT HADN'T SEEN HER YET SO SHE MERELY MERGED WITH THE SURROUNDING UNDERGROWTH...

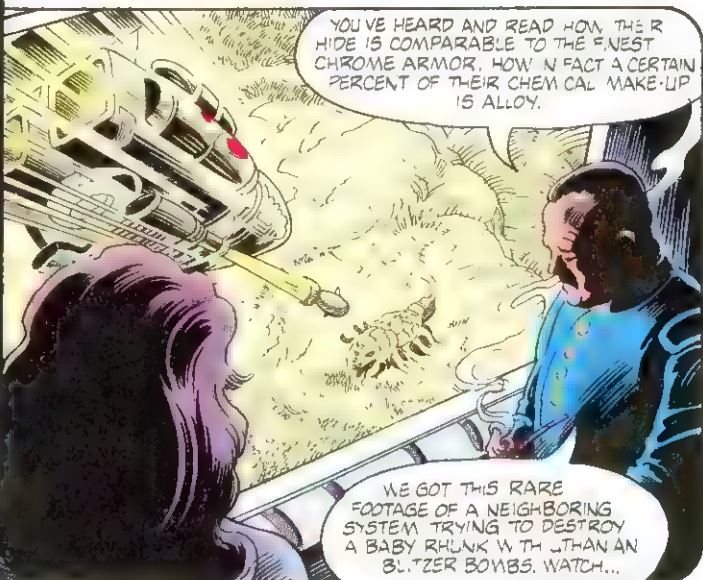
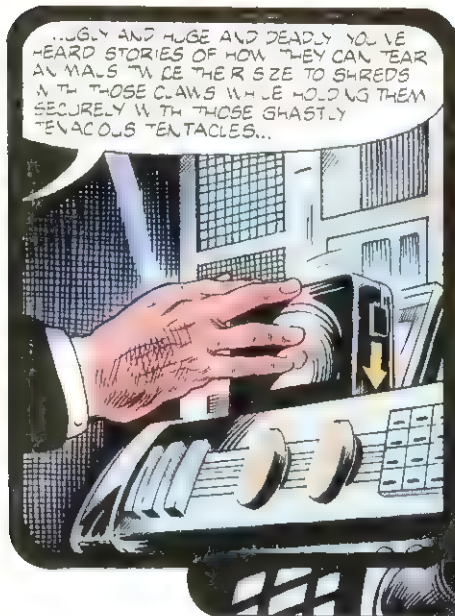
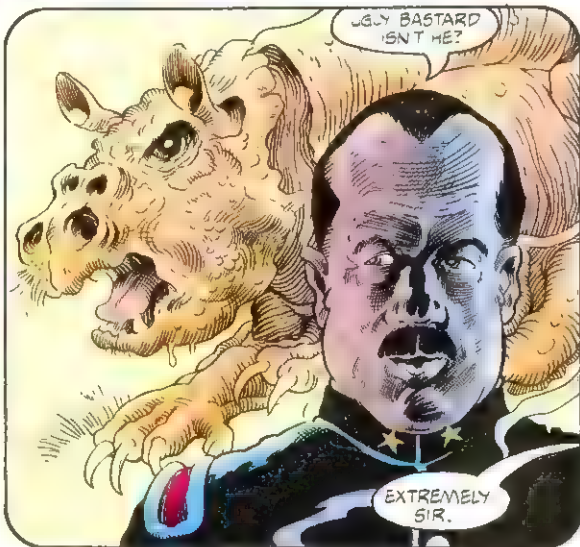
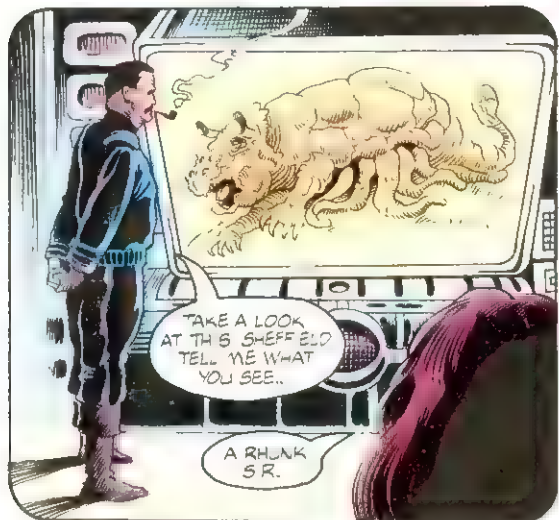
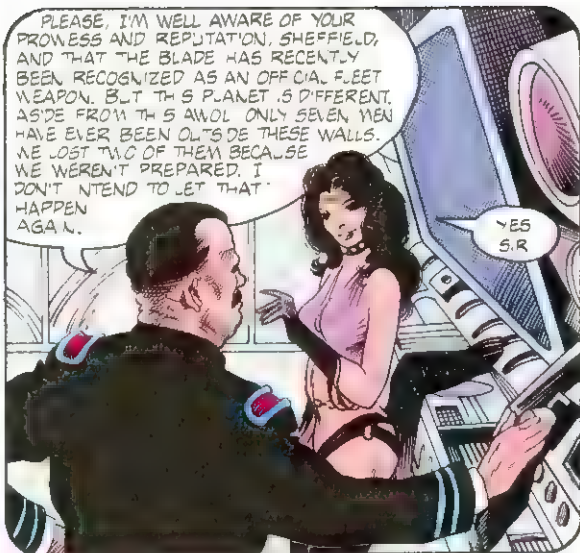


SHE WATCHED IN REPUGNANT FASCINATION AS IT HEAVED ITS TITANIC BULK OUT OF THE WET EARTH AND YAWNED ENORMOUSLY. IT WAS EVERYTHING THE MANUAL AND THE COMMANDER HAD DESCRIBED...



NOW I'M SURE YOU'RE FAMILIAR WITH THE NODDLE ON THIS PLANET FROM YOUR MANUAL. SHEPHERD LET ME EMPHASIZE THAT THESE THREE HUNDRED AND SIXTY- EIGHT PAGES BEFORE YOU DO NOT EXAGGERATE IN DESCRIBING THE FERO CITY OF THESE CREATURES...







THEY CAN'T BE KILLED, SHEFFIELD. WE'VE TRIED! WE'VE LOST MEN TRYING, SPENT MILLIONS. IT'S NOT WITHIN OUR PRESENT TECHNICAL SCOPE, THEY SIMPLY CAN'T BE STOPPED.

BUT THEY CAN BE FOOLED.

FOOLED SIR?



HOAXED CONNED THERE'S ONLY ONE ANIMAL ON THIS PLANET A FULL GROWN RHUNK WON'T ATTACK AND IMMEDIATELY DISMEMBER... DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT ANIMAL IS SHEFFIELD?

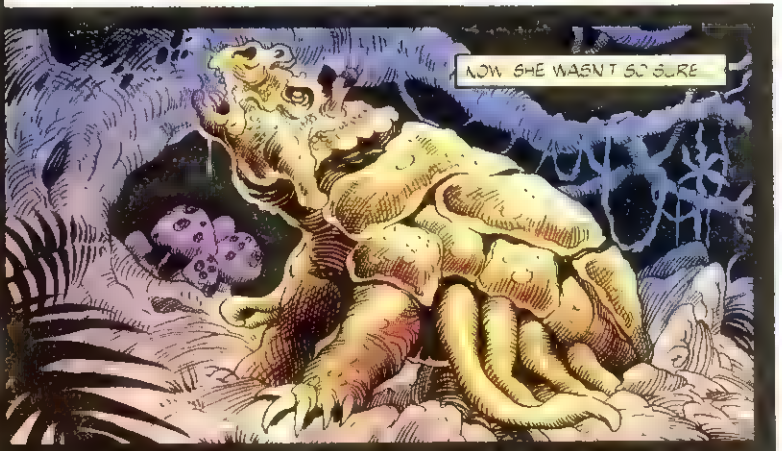
ANOTHER RHUNK, SIR?



THAT'S VERY GOOD SHEFFIELD, VERY ASTUTE. YES ANOTHER RHUNK. AND WE CAN MAKE ANOTHER RHUNK...WE HAVE MADE ANOTHER RHUNK IN OUR LABS HERE IN THE COLONY. WITH THIS INSTRUMENT IN MY HANDS

A COLIFAX

A COLIFAX. IT HUNG FROM THE GOLD CHAIN ON HER WAIST, THE COLD METAL PRESSING UNCOMFORTABLY AGAINST HER BARE TUMMY BANGING AGAINST IT WHEN SHE WALKED UNTIL THIS MOMENT, IT HAD BEEN A HEAVY UNWANTED BURDEN THAT SHE'D HAVE GIVEN A WEEK'S PAY TO BE RID OF, TOP SECRET OR NOT...



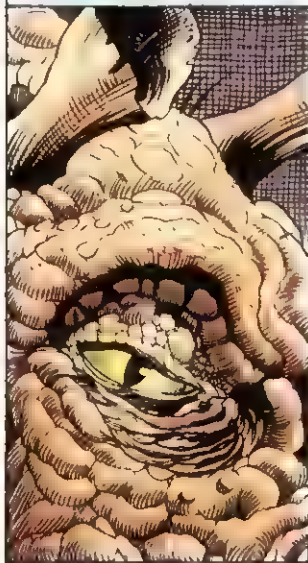
NOW SHE WASN'T SO SURE

IF IT COULD SOMEHOW PROTECT HER FROM THIS INCREDIBLE CREATURE BEFORE HER... FOR IT WAS OBVIOUS NOW THAT NOTHING ELSE COULD. THE COMMANDER HAD BEEN RIGHT. SHE'D BEEN A FOOL TO THINK SHE COULD INFLECT THE SLIGHTEST DAMAGE ON ONE OF THESE MONSTROSITIES WITH HER FLIMSY SWORD. THE EMERGING RHUNK WAS AN AWE-INSPIRING STUDY IN ARMOR-PLATED DESTRUCTION.

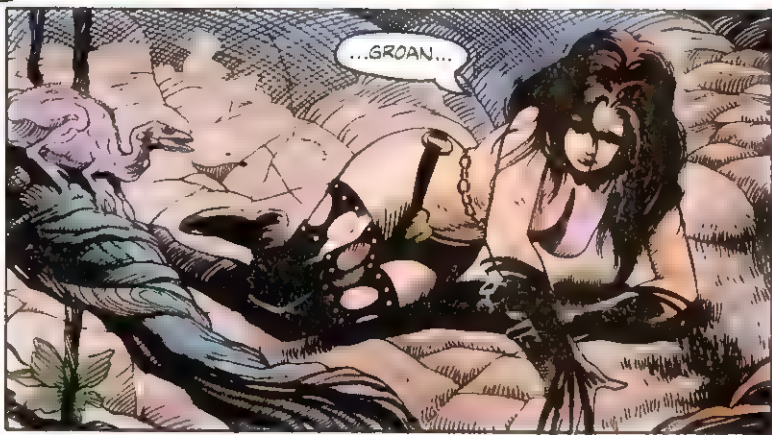
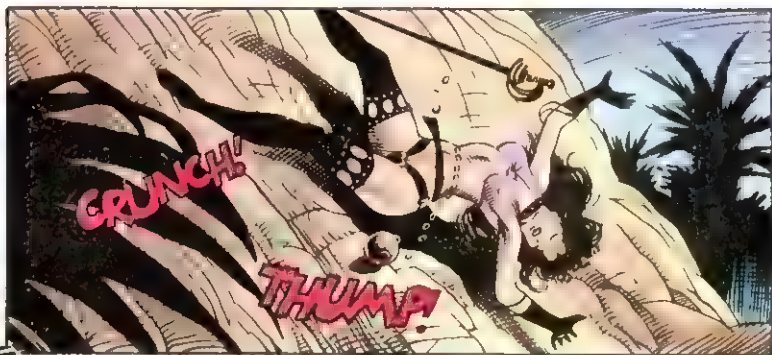
NOTHING SHORT OF A T-554 MISSILE COULD BRING IT DOWN, OF THAT SHE WAS SURE. THE SWORD IN HER HAND FELT, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN HER LIFE, TOTALLY INEFFECTUAL. THAT GUY SHE'D DEPARTED FROM COLONY TWELVE MUST HAVE BEEN AN IDIOT; OR...

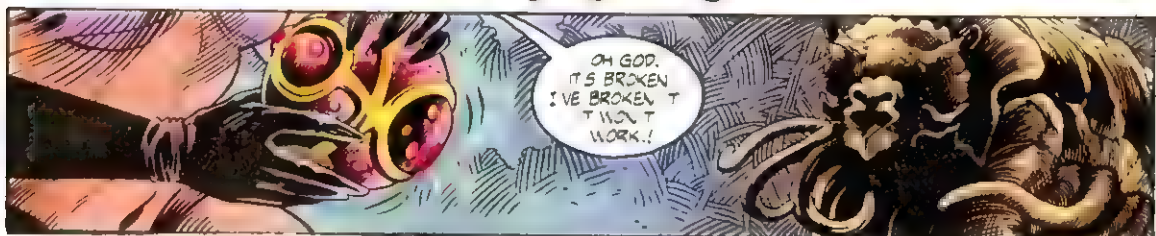
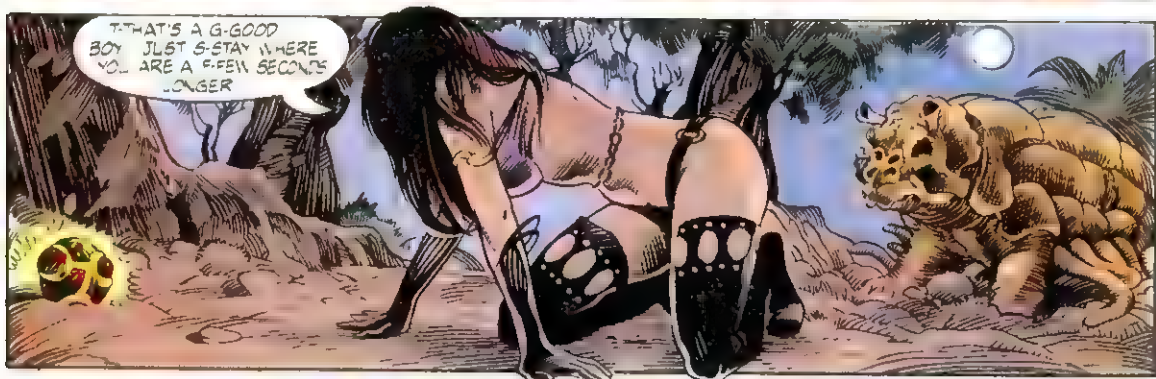
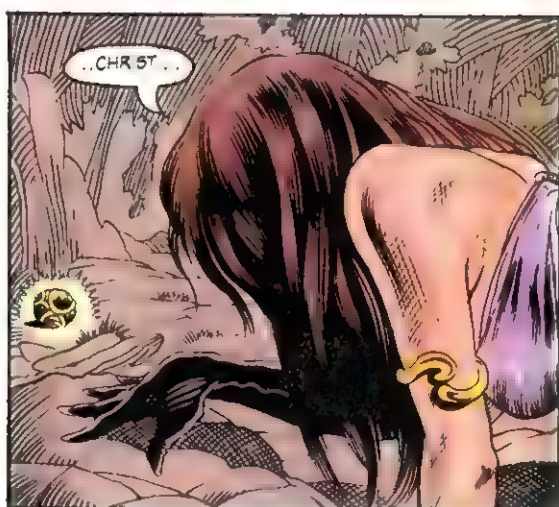
LIKE HER, HE'D NEVER SEEN A REAL RHUNK & THE FLEE BEFORE.

SHE STUMBLED BACK THROUGH THE CREEPERS AS IT LIFTED ITS HEAD AND GAZED ABOUT. PERHAPS IF SHE WERE VERY, VERY QUIET...



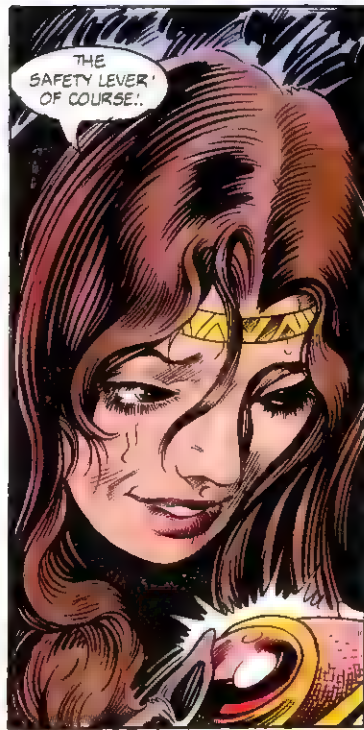
ABRUPTLY THE GROUND DISAPPEARED... SHE WAS TREADING EMPTY AIR...



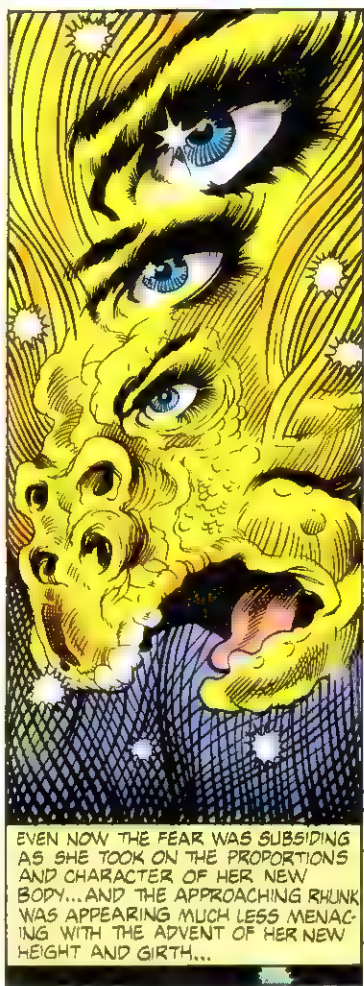
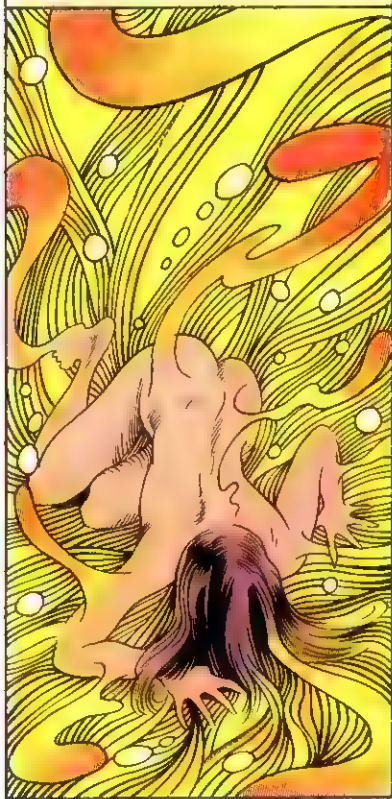


METHODICALLY, AS IF CONFIDENT OF THE HELPLESSNESS OF ITS PREY, IT ADVANCED ON HER, MUSCLES RIDING IN SENSUOUS RHYTHM ALONG ITS SHOULDERS TENTACLES TWITCHING IN ANTICIPATION. SHEFFIELD FELT HER BLOOD TURN TO ICE...



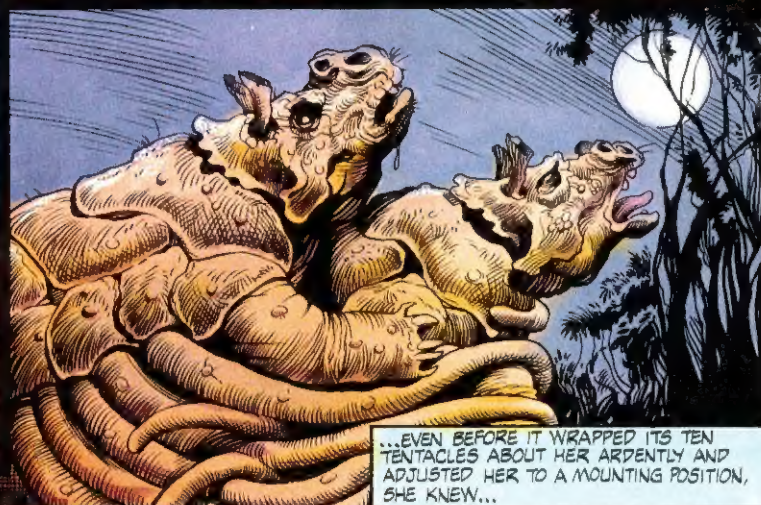


THE HOTNESS FLOODING HER BODY WAS NOT ALTOGETHER UNPLEASANT. SHE HAD THE DISTINCT FEELING SHE WAS BEING PULLED SLOWLY APART FROM ALL SIDES LIKE HEATED TAFFY. SHE REFUSED TO PANIC THOUGH; SHE KNEW, AS COLONY COMMAND HAD TOLD HER, THE PROCESS WOULD REVERSE ITSELF THE MOMENT SHE STEPPED ON THE YELLOW BUTTON...



ITS NOSTRILS DIDN'T FLARE ANY LESS HOWEVER, AND THE TREMORS ALONG ITS BACK INCREASED, IF ANYTHING. IT WAS STILL INTENSELY INTERESTED IN HER FOR SOME REASON...

EVEN BEFORE IT MOVED OVER AND DELIBERATELY CRUSHED FLAT HER COLIFAX WITH ITS MASSIVE HOOF, SEALING HER FATE FOREVER, SHE KNEW...



...EVEN BEFORE IT WRAPPED ITS TEN TENTACLES ABOUT HER ARDENTLY AND ADJUSTED HER TO A MOUNTING POSITION, SHE KNEW...

FOR SHE HAD LOOKED CLOSE INTO ITS EYES AND THEY HAD TOLD HER EVERYTHING. PERFECT AS THE COLIFAX WAS IT COULDN'T QUITE DISGUISE THE FAMILIAR PERSONALITY BEHIND THOSE EYES, THE QUIET, INVERTED BUT HIGHLY IMAGINATIVE BRAIN...

AND IN THAT INSTANT SHE KNEW EXACTLY WHY LEAKWOOD HAD LED HER THIS MERRY CHASE AND WHAT THE PIECE OF EQUIPMENT WAS HE'D STOLEN FROM COLONY SIX...IF HE COULDN'T HAVE HER ONE WAY, HE'D HAVE HER ANOTHER...

SHE'D MISS HER FRIENDS, OF COURSE, AND LIFE AT THE COLONY. BUT MOST OF ALL, SHE'D MISS HER SWORD. EVEN WITH THE HIGHLY SENSITIVE TENTACLES AT HER COMMAND, WITH SEVEN THOUSAND POUNDS OF RHUNK BEHIND IT, IT WAS DIFFICULT TO BE AS GRACEFUL AS DETAH THORIS.





**SUN RUNNERS 2.
COMING IN JANUARY.**



**BY PAT BRODERICK
AND ROGER MCKENZIE.**

DAVID SCROGGY, EDITOR.

PACIFIC. TOMORROW IS HERE.



SILVERHEELS #2 COMING IN JANUARY

A HERO FOR
THE NEW ERA

**APRIL CAMPBELL
BRUCE JONES**

Artwork © 1985 Scott Hampton

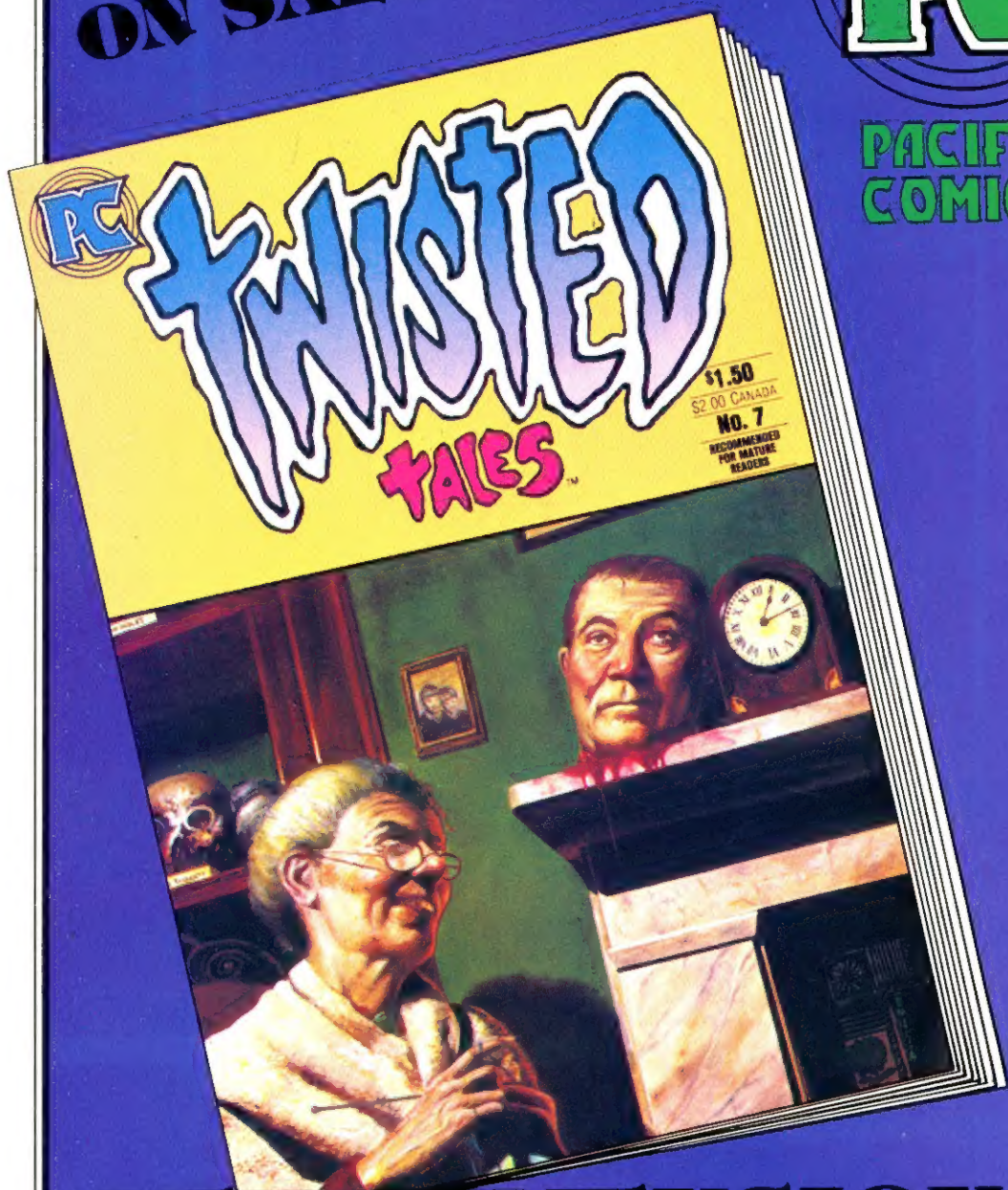
**ART BY SCOTT HAMPTON
KEN STEACY CO-FEATURE**

PACIFIC. TOMORROW IS HERE.

ON SALE SOON!



**PACIFIC
COMICS**



**NEW DIMENSIONS
in T E R R O R!**

Written & Edited by **BRUCE JONES**